THE SOULS ASCENSION IN THE STATE OF SEPARATION.

Summarily delivered in a Sermon preached at *Shenly* in the County of *Hertford*, the 21. of *November*, 1660. at the Funeral Solemnities of Mrs *Mary Jessop*, late wife of *William Jessop* Esq; and since enlarged and publish'd for common benefit.

By ISAAC LOEFFS. M.A.

Eccles. 3. 21. *Who knoweth the Spirit of Man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the Earth?*

London, Printed for *N. Ranew* and *J. Robinson*, at the *Angel* in *Fewen-street*, 1670.

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BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

TO

My ever honoured Uncle

WILLIAM JESSOP,

ESQUIRE.

SIR,

MY natural modesty and backwardness to appear in publick, together with the difficulty of obtaining the Press,

have detained this ſhort Treatiſe ſo long from you, that you may well judge it unſeaſonable now to be preſented unto you. Yet conſidering the duty of that relation wherein I ſtand unto you through your late dear Yoak-Fellow, whoſe death was the occaſion of this Diſcourſe; and the obligation that is upon me by ſo many favours and unde-

ſerved

ſerved kindneſſes received from you; as alſo the benefit which poſſibly may accrue to others from ſo ſerious a Subject; I have ventured it abroad into the world, under the protection of your Name, how weakly ſo-ever managed, and liable to the cenſures of this ſcrupulous Age. However, I may hope, that, as Funeral Sermons, above others,

have an advantage upon Auditors by their sad occasion, so this also may affect the impartial Reader by the weight of its Arguments. And although it was first intended and promised you for a private present, and an acknowledgment of that due respect, and unfeigned love, which I do and shall ever bear to your self, and your Relations; yet I pre-

ſume it will not be the leſs accepted, becauſe others are now made equal ſharers in it. And my confidence herein is the more ſtrengthned by the conſideration of that publick ſpirit which you have manifeſted at all times, by your willing and unwearied pains in the ſervice of your Generation; wherein your integrity and faithfulneſs have ſo eminently ap-

appeared, that your name is known and honoured throughout the Nation. But this above all is your Crown, that in all your publick employments, you have not ſought your ſelf, and the advancement of your Family, ſo much as the honour of God, the intereſt of his people, and the enlargement of the Goſpel, by your high eſteem of, and

the encouragement you have given unto the Faithful Ministers of it, among whom I have been an unworthy Labourer. And blessed be the Lord, who hath made his Grace to abound towards you by his assisting and supporting presence in all your paines and travels, whereby you have been enabled so chearfully to undergo the burden of your hard ser-

vices

vices; who hath also blessed your careful and conscientious endeavours for the promoting of Godliness in your Family, and among your near Relations. One fruit whereof I cannot but mention for your unspeakable comfort, concerning your dear Relation taken from you, being present at her dissolution; who about to close her eyes from her mourn-

ing

ing Children and Friends, and all the visible things of this life, did sensibly, joyfully, and openly acknowledge and declare her assured and known interest in Christ, unto whom she immediately departed. Now the Lord supply all your wants, and be your reward, and the blessing of your off-Spring. And if this poor present may add any thing of spiritual benefit and advantage

to

to your own ſoul, the ſouls of your relations, or any others, it will be the rejoycing of

Your unworthy Kinſman and Servant in the Goſpel.

From my ſtudy at *Shenly* in the County of *Hertford*, Oct. 20. 1669.

ISAAC LOEFFS.

THe Reader is desired to correct these following mistakes, which escaped the Press by reason of the Authors absence.

PAge 2. Line 27. for *walk* read. *reach* P. 5. l. 12. leave out *not*. P. 9. l. 13. f. *hand* r. *head*. P. 10. l. 3. f. *alwayes* r. *already*. P. 22. l. 8. f. *live* r. *evil*. P. 26. l. 5. f. *Luther* r. *Augustine*. T. 43. l. 16. f. *strange* r. *strong*. P. 120. l. 9. f. *medicinal* r. *mystical*. P. 125. l. 2. f. *Christ*, r. *God*. P. 129. l. 2. blot out *in Scriptures*.

THE SOULS ASCENSION In the State of SEPARATION.

PHILLIP. 1. 23.

For I am in a ſtraight betwixt two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.

MAN *being in honour abideth not*, or lodgeth not all night therein, ſaith David, Pſal. 49. 12. *But becomes like the Beaſts that periſh; for that which befalleth the Sons of men, befalleth Beaſts; as the one dieth, ſo dieth the other, ſo that a man hath no prehe-minence above a Beaſt*, ſaith Solomon, *Eccl.* 3. 19. Nevertheleſs, though he dieth like the Beaſt, yet his Spirit retaining the immortality of its eſſence, returneth not to corruption with his body, but is capable of a ſtate after death and diſſolution, according as the infinite wiſdom of his Creator doth diſpoſe thereof in a way of juſtice or mercy.

* And becauſe moſt men are ſo irrational and fooliſh, as either through ignorance of their own nature and being, to deny the immortality of their ſouls; or through deluſion, and preſumption to conclude the certainty of their future felicity; judging all things by ſenſe, and the preſent diſpenſations of external and common providence: therefore it ſhall be my preſent deſign, in handling this Text, to give unto you a private proſpect through the gate of death, towards the mountaines and valleys of eternal happineſs and miſery, by preſenting unto you the ſecret and hidden way of the ſpirit and ſoul of man in its ſudden flight and motion, at the time and in the ſtate of ſeparation from the corporeal and fleſhy part, which falls from it towards its earthly center. And foraſmuch as the diſſolution of nature doth not only divide the two eſſential parts of ſoul and body, but alſo the common rode of this temporal life into two diſtinct paths, towards the greateſt different ſtates of everlaſting joy or ſorrow; I ſhall labour to walk both in this ſubject; the firſt in the doctrinal part, becauſe it is the proper and plain ſcope of the Text; and the other

* *For the ſpirit returneth to God who gave it.* Chap. 12 7.

other in the Application by way of consequence and deduction. For which end and purpose, it will be necessary for me first to bring you to the Text by the preceeding parts of the Chapter and the occasion of this Epistle, to which it hath relation; and then by the Text to the matter intended. The occasion of *Paul's* writing this Epistle to the Church at *Philippi*, was an honourable Present the Church had sent unto him, being then a prisoner in *Rome*, by the hands of *Epaphroditus* their pastor, by way of charity to supply his present necessities: By whom having understood the state and condition of that Church, and being affected with so great an expression of their love unto him, he returned this sweet Letter and Spiritual Epistle. And in this first Chapter, after his usual benedictory salutation, first he declareth his thankfulness unto God, for their spiritual estate and continuance in the fellowship of the Gospel, unto the 5th. verse. Secondly his confidence in God, for the perfecting of the work of grace begun, as he was perswaded through charity to judge in them all, by their future and final perseverance, unto the eighth verse. Thirdly, his prayer for their increase and abound-

ing in fruitfulneſs, unto the 11. verſe. Then from the 12. to the 18. verſe, he laboureth to ſatisfie them concerning the conſequent events of his preſent ſufferings; that they were rather for the furtherance, then hinderance of the Goſpel, whichhe proveth by two arguments. Firſt, becauſe the cauſe of his ſufferings, which was the preaching of Chriſt the Saviour of the world, was hereby made known, and divulged, both in *Nero*'s Pallace, and in the neighbouring Cities. Secondly, becauſe by his ſufferings many of the brethren were made more bold to preach the Goſpel: and notwithſtanding there were ſome that preached Chriſt out of envy and ſtrife, thinking thereby to add to his afflictions, yet he was ſo far from being troubled at it, that he rejoyced, becauſe Chriſt was the more preached. In the 19. verſe the Apoſtle diſcovereth the gracious and ſweet frame and temper of his own heart under his ſufferings, in the firm confidence he had, that all things ſhould work together for his good, and turn to his ſalvation, as the return and fruit of their prayers, and through the ſupply of the ſpirit of God unto him, that he might hold out under his tryals, according to his earneſt expectation and hope, that through

through his ſtedfaſtneſs and boldneſs, both in life and death, Chriſt might be magnified in his body: whereof he giveth this reaſon, verſe 21. *For to me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain.* That is, if I live I ſhall honour Chriſt by my life, and if I dye I ſhall honour him by my death, and that death ſhall be my gain, according to his confidence before expreſſed, that it ſhould turn to his ſalvation. But in caſe he ſhould live, he ſhould have fruit of his labour, or it were not worth the while to live, for to live is Chriſt, that is, he ſhould preach Chriſt, which would be the gain of others, as his death would be his own. Now in theſe thoughts *Paul* is at a ſtand, what to chooſe or deſire, whether to live or dye; for being a Priſoner at *Rome* for Chriſt's ſake and the Goſpel, he might expect, as well to dye, as to live; and being as it were indifferent to either, he debates the caſe and controverſie in his own heart, according to the words of my Text, *I am in a ſtraight betwixt two*, &c.

In which words we have three diſtinct parts.

Firſt, *Æquilibrium animi*, the even ballance of *Pauls* mind in reſpect of life and death, *For I am in a ſtraight betwixt two.*

Secondly, *Inclinatio affectionum*, the inclination of his affections; and deſire; *Having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt.*

Thirdly, *Status vel determinatio judicii*, The determination of the controverſie, and the diſcovery of his judgement upon mature deliberation; in the laſt words of the Text, *Which is far better.*

Before I lay down the intended Doctrine or Propoſition from this Scripture, I will briefly explain the terms of the Text, to juſtifie the clearneſs of the doctrinal deduction from the Text.

* *I am in a ſtraight betwixt two.* I am ſtraigthly held on both ſides, So *Beza* tranſlateth it; or I am preſſed of two, according to the vulgar Latine. S. *Paul* preſenteth unto himſelf life and death, two different objects of his choice and election, and both *ſub ratione boni*, appearing unto him to be really good for him; but which of theſe to cloſe withal, and pitch upon, he knoweth not. Not that it was in his power to live or to die, but if the *Lord* ſhould give him his free liberty to chuſe either, he was at a ſtand in his preſent thoughts, which way he had beſt incline himſelf,

* συνέχομαι τῶν δυό.

as

as the caſe was now with him, being an Apoſtle of Chriſt, and now impriſoned for him; whether it were abſolutely better upon all accounts, and all things conſidered, for him to die by a violent hand, or to be enlarged as a further inſtrument for the promoting and propating of the Goſpel in the world. As it was *Davids* caſe, when he was to chuſe one of thoſe three judgements propoſed unto him, 2 *Sam.* 24. 13, 14. *Shall ſeven years famine come in thy land? or wilt thou flye three moneths before thine enemies, while they purſue thee? or that there be three dayes peſtilence in thy Land? And* David *ſaid unto* Gad, *I am in a great ſtraight; let us fall now into the hand of the Lord (for his mercies are great) and not into the hand of man.* This was his ſtraight in reſpect of evils, and he choſe well, for he choſe the leaſt in all circumſtances, for the time, the nature, and the immediate inflictor of the evil or judgement. But *Pauls* ſtraight was in reſpect of good objects to be choſen, and which of the two were the beſt, was his preſent controverſie, whether to depart and be with Chriſt, or to live and abide ſtill in the body to preach him: both would be for the honour of Chriſt, but the former

would be his own gain, the latter the gain of the Church; and his own private intereſt was the leſs unto him, becauſe if he lived, it was but the deferring of his heavenly reward; and his affections ſometimes were ſo ſtrong, that, though it was impoſſible, yet he could have wiſhed a total deprivation thereof for the Jews ſake, *Rom.* 9. 3. *I could wiſh, that my ſelf were accurſed from Chriſt, for my brethren my kinſmen according to the fleſh:* Love deſireth impoſſibilities. By all this it appears how great the Apoſtle's ſtraight was betwixt living and dying, as a needle hanging between two loadſtones of equal force and power.

† ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων.

† Having a deſire, or greatly deſiring, that is, in reſpect of his own happineſs, and his great love and delight in Chriſt, for whom he was now in a ſuffering condition, to depart, that he might be with him. The word in the original ſignifieth a vehement deſire, or an ardent and hot deſire; and it is obſervable, that he doth not barely ſay he did deſire, but having a deſire, which *Beza* tranſlateth to contend in deſire, * anſwerable to that expreſſion of our Saviour Chriſt, *Luke*

* *Plus eſt animo ferri & contendere, quam ſimpliciter cupere, Beza in locum.*

Luke 22. 15. *With deſire have I deſired to eat this Paſſeover with you before I ſuffer.* So that in theſe words we may conſider *Paul* looking ſolely upon Chriſt and his immediate preſence, waving all former conſiderations, whereby this fervent deſire was limited and himſelf ſtraightned: So that *Pauls* natural (if I may ſo call it) deſire and inclination was towards the Lord, and to be with him, which in it ſelf conſidered was earneſt, agreeable to his earneſt expectation, or ſtretching forth of the hand in looking, as that word denoteth in the 20. verſe of this Chapter.

To depart, ἀναλῦσαι; or to be diſſolved, according to others; or to die, as the Apoſtle had ſaid in the 21. verſe, *To die is gain.* The Apoſtle ſeemeth to ſtrain himſelf for a word, that he might ſet forth ſo gainful a death, as he is ſpeaking of, which ſometimes he calleth a diſſolving of this earthy tabernacle, and an unclothing, 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. 4. Peter *ſtyles it a putting off of this tabernacle.* The ſpirit of God in the Holy penmen of the Scriptures, hath ſet forth the death of the Saints by pleaſant and allluring expreſſions, as to ſleep, to be changed, to be gathered to the Fathers,

and

and in this place, to depart.

And to be with Chriſt. *Paul* was in Chriſt alwayes by grace, and Chriſt revealed in him by the ſpirit of illumination; he was a follower of Chriſt by conformity and obedience, and came behinde none of of the other Apoſtles in his labour and ſufferings for him; and as he deſir'd to be found in Chriſt, ſo to depart and to be with him, that he might immediately enjoy him, and enter into the joy of his Lord and Maſter, unto whom he had been faithful in his miniſtry and Apoſtleſhip. The ſtate of happineſs is often ſet forth in Scripture by this phraſe of being with Chriſt, and being with the Lord, *Luke.* 23. 43. *This day ſhalt thou be with me in Paradiſe.* Rom. 6. 8. *Now if we be dead with Chriſt, we believe we ſhall alſo live with him.* And 1 Theſ. 4. 17. *Then we which are alive and remain ſhall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and ſo we ſhall ever be with the Lord.*

Which is far better, *or very much better,

* πολλῷ γὰρ χρεῖσσον μᾶλλον. that is, in regard of himſelf it is better to die then to live, though in regard of the Church for him to abide in the fleſh, it was better

and

and more needful for them, as in the following verſe. And in regard of himſelf and his glory with Chriſt, it muſt needs be far better, if we conſider, as *Paul* did, that far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, which ſhould be the reward of his light afflictions, as he ſo them eſteem'd comparatively, 2 *Cor.* 4. 17. *For our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;* καθ' ὑπερβολὴν εἰς ὑπερβολὴν, it is beyond expreſſion, * And therefore our tranſlation rendereth it, a farre more exceeding, as *Paul* here ſtyles it, far better.

* *Chriſtus & cælum non patiuntur hyperbolem.*

Having thus opened the words of the Text, I ſhall lay down one Propoſition only from theſe words of the Apoſtle, and handle that as ſuitable to this preſent occaſion and ſolemnity.

Doct. *That it is the deſireable and peculiar priviledge of the Saints, to be brought immediately to Chriſt by their departure hence by death.*

In the managing of this doctrine or propoſition, I ſhall endeavour to ſhew and clear theſe three general Heads; the handling whereof will take in the ſubſtance and eſſential parts of the whole Text it ſelf.

Firſt,

First, What is that death, in the nature and quality of it, that brings the ſouls of the Saints departed immediately unto Chriſt.

Secondly, what is it, or what may be underſtood by this phraſe, *to be with Chriſt.*

Thirdly, howdoth the death of the Saints bring them immediately to Chriſt, at their departure; and in what manner doth the Soul depart to Chriſt.

Firſt, What is that death, in the nature and quality of it, that brings the Souls of the Saints departed immediately to Chriſt.

1. Negatively, Every death, or the death of every man, doth not bring him or his ſoul to Chriſt. It is not death barely and in it ſelf conſidered, as it is a privation of life, by the diſſolution of nature, and parting aſunder of ſoul and body. Otherwiſe what were the priviledge of *Paul* which here he ſo greatly deſired, more then of *Judas* the Traitor? but that *Judas* went not to Chriſt, but to his own place, is evident, *Acts* 1. 25. *The godly and the wicked die alike in reſpect of natural diſſolution*, Eccl. 2. 26. *How dieth the wiſe man? as the fool.* As there is no viſible diſtinction, or marke of difference between the Godly and the wicked by the external things of pro-

providence in the courſe of their lives, but all things fall out alike to all men, that no man might know love or hatred by what is before him, but by what is within him, and upon his heart: ſo neither can the righteous be diſcerned from the reprobates by any viſible character of the outward manner of their departure and diſſolution. And this will appear in the ſeveral kinds of death both are ſubject unto in the courſe of providence, as alſo in the outward circumſtances thereof. The godly and wicked may both die of the ſame diſeaſe and diſtemper of body, as feaver, conſumption, dropſie, yea the moſt painful diſeaſes, as the gout and the ſtone; and alſo of the moſt noyſome and uncomfortable diſtempers, as the ſmall pox, and the plague it ſelf, of which *Hezekiah* was ſick unto death, 2 *Kings* 20. 1. Again, they may both die by a violent hand. *Stephen* was ſtoned to death, as well as *Achan*. They may both alſo die by the ſame occaſion and ſudden providences, as thoſe, upon whom the tower in *Siloam* fell and ſlew them, *Luke* 13. 4. Which did not argue, that they were greater ſinners then others. Moreover, they may both die in the full number of their days, and a wicked man may live to

be

be an hundred years old, and be accurſed, *Iſai.* 65. 20. And though wicked men ſometimes, through the juſt judgement of God, doe not live out halfe their dayes, yet the godly may die in their youth and ſtrength, and the Lord in mercy take them away from the evil to come, *Iſa.* 57. 1. Laſtly, they may die alike in regard of the preſent peace and calm, or trouble and diſturbance of ſpirit; a godly man may want aſſurance upon a death bed, and a wicked may goe out of the world like a Lamb, with peace and preſumption, and a quiet diſſolution, *Pſal* 73. 4. *There are no bands in their death.*

2. But poſitively. That death which bringeth the Soul to Chriſt at the time of departure out of this life, is to be conſidered, in relation to the ſtate and condition of the perſon in death, as holy, righteous and godly: So that it is the quality of the perſon dying, that makes him happy in his death, whoſe death is his gain, and his departure to be with Chriſt.

To this the Scriptures bear clear and rich teſtimonie, *Prov.* 14 32. The righteous hath hope in his end, *Pſ.* 37. 37. The godly man is marked with this priviledge, *Marke the perfect man, behold the upright, the end of that*

that man is peace. Balaam's wiſh ſtrongly confirmeth it, *Numb.* 23. 10. *Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my latter end be like his.* And to add no more quotations in ſo plain a caſe, *Paul* in my Text appropriateth this priviledge to himſelf, and ſuch as he was, real Chriſtians, true Saints, and unfeigned believers. *I am in a ſtraight betwixt two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, and to me to live is Chriſt, and to dye is gain.* Therefore look what we are living, ſuch we are dying. Death is but the term of life, and changeth not the ſtate of the perſon, but the degree of that ſtate. Grace muſt be wrought here, but perfected hereafter in glory, which is grace conſummate; and if no grace here, no glory hereafter, for as the tree falleth ſo it lieth. But if I ſhould draw the curtaines that are about theſe dying Saints, and conſider how they die that come to Chriſt by death, I would propoſe it unto you briefly in two or three expreſſions, for the diſcovery of it and your information in it, according to the Scripture. The Godly die in the faith of Chriſt, believing in him and all the promiſes of God, which in him are yea and amen, *Heb.* 11. 13. Theſe all died in faith, not having received the promiſes,

miſes; they die in the intereſt of Chriſt, and they are Chriſts in death, as well as life, Rom. 14. 8. *Whether we live, we live to the Lord, and whether we dye we dye to the Lord, whether we live therefore or dye we are the Lords.* Yea they die in union with Chriſt, *Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord*, Rev. 14. 13. This is that death, and the death of ſuch as theſe are, is that departure whereof *Paul* ſpeaketh in my Text, and how deſirable it is, beyond this preſent life it ſelf, will further appear by the ſeveral and ſutable acceptations of the word ἀναλῦσαι, in the original, which we tranſlate to depart; in which word, as an alablaſter box, the Apoſtle hath incloſed precious ſpikenard to annoint the Saints againſt their funeral: by which we ſhall underſtand the gainful advantage of death to the godly, as it looketh back to this preſent life, as the *terminus a quo*, or the bounds from which they depart.

Firſt, the word is uſed to looſen the cables of a ſhip, *ſolvere rudentes*, a metaphor taken from mariners, who ſail from one Banke or Port unto another; it importeth a flitting or ſailing from the ſtate of this preſent life, to our heavenly country. Afflictions in the Scriptures are compared to waters

waters, and the world is a troubleſome ſea to the Saints, over which they ſail through many ſtormes, till they come to ſhore: For *through much tribulation we muſt enter into the Kingdom of God*, Acts 14. 22. *Many are the afflictions of the righteous, and in the world ye ſhall have tribulation*, ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples, *John* 16. laſt. *And all that will live godly in Chriſt Jeſus*, ſaith *Paul*, *ſhall ſuffer perſecution*, 2 Tim. 3. 12. *But the death of the Saints, is the end of their ſorrowes; and if we ſuffer with Chriſt, we ſhall be glorified together*, Rom. 8. 18. Then all tears ſhall be wiped from their eyes, and ſorrow and mourning ſhall flee away, when they ſhall arrive at the land of promiſe, the Cape of good hope. Heaven is the Saints fair haven, it is called the boſome of *Abraham*, Luk. 16. 23. Which *Gregory Nyſſen* expounds to be like a bay, or boſome of the Sea, into which a godly man, ſayling from hence, putteth in his ſoul, as a haven free from danger and tempeſt, where it ſhall receive the fulneſs of all good things.

Secondly, The word is tranſlated [*reverti*] to return. Believers are ſent forth to labour in this world, and they are Chriſts factors upon earth, for the advancement of his glory and kingdom,

and the heavenly gain of their own eternal happineſs. They trade for heaven, by which their converſations are ſaid to be in heaven, *Phil.* 3. 20. τὸ πολίτευμα ἡμῶν, our City life, or commerce, *or our converſation is in heaven, whence we look for ſthe Lord Jeſus Chriſt to come.* They are citizens of heaven, but they trade from home, in a far countrey, as merchants ſeeking the pearl of great price, *Mat.* 13. 44. Which having found, they returned home richly laden with the treaſure of the Goſpel. Death is the ſouls return to God, Eccleſ. 12. 7. *Then ſhall the duſt return to the earth, as it was; and the ſpirit ſhall return to God who gave it.* *Job* ſaith, he *ſhall return thither*, Job. 1. 21. *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked ſhall I return thither.* אשׁב שׁמה, which the Greek Scholies expounds πρὸς τὸν θεὸν, unto God. How joyful is the return of the Saints to their heavenly home, and their happy reſt, after their laborious travail and reſtleſs pains in the works of their ſalvation, attended with all the fruits of holineſs and righteouſneſs, as an evidence of their faith and teſtimony of their obedience. *Bleſſed are the dead which dye in the Lord, even ſo ſaith the ſpirit; for they reſt from their labours, and their*

workes follow them, Rev. 14. 13. As the wagons which *Joseph* sent for his Father *Jacob*, and his houshold, brought them to the land of *Goshen*, and to the full plenty of *Joseph's* provision; so death bringeth the Saints to their joyful rest, and to Christ their heavenly *Joseph*. Death is the unharnessing of the Saints at their final return to their full peace, and everlasting inheritance.* * *Solvimus sarcinas & vincula.*

Thirdly, the word is applyed sometimes to the loosing of the cords of a tent. * Beleivers in this life, and while they are in the body, dwell as in tents and tabernacles, in an unsetled and changeable estate, as pilgrims and strangers, having no continuing City, and therefore often remove their tents, like the Patriarchs of old, *Heb.* 11. 9, 10. Where the Apostle, speaking of *Abraham* saith, *that by faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles, with* Isaac *and* Jacob, *the heirs with him of the same promise, for he looked for a City which had foundations, whose builder and maker is God.* All the faithful are heirs of eternal promises, how mean and contemptible soever they * *Solvere fines tabernaculorum.*

ſeem in the eyes of the world, as a gazing-ſtock unto them, among whom they ſojourn for a time. As they are not of the world, ſo they have little favour and reſpect from it; for therefore the world hateth them, *John* 15.19. No wonder therefore the people of God have alwayes accounted themſelves ſtrangers here, *Pſal.* 119.19. *I am a ſtranger in the earth*, ſaith *David*, *hide not thy commandements from me.* And *Peter* writing to the Jews, 1 *Pet.* 2. 11. *I beſeech you*, ſaith he, *as pilgrims and ſtrangers, abſtain from fleſhly luſts which warre againſt the Soul.* How welcome then is that diſſolution, that looſeneth the cords of thoſe tents, and pulleth up their tabernacles (for 2 *Cor.* 5. 1. *We know, that if the earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*) when the Sons of God, the heires of promiſe, ſhall no more have moveable dwellings, but abiding manſions, and that in their Fathers houſe, *John* 14. 2, 3. *In my Fathers houſe*, ſaith Chriſt to his Diſciples comforting of them, are μοναὶ πολλαὶ *many manſions; I goe to prepare a place for you, that where I am there ye may be alſo.*

Laſtly, the word is alſo expounded, to be delive-

delivered [*Liberari.*] So *Beza* maketh it the ſame in ſignification with ῥύσεται, *Rom.* 7. 24. *O wretched man that I am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death, or from this mortal body.* Or as *Dibdate* paraphraſeth upon that Text, O that I 'were but out of this animal and 'terreſtrial life, during which ſin doth 'dwell in me, and through it I am yet 'under the neceſſity of dying; and that I 'were tranſported into the liberty of the 'glory of Gods children in the life of 'happineſs. St. *Paul* ſaw a law in his members warring againſt the law of his mind, and leading him captive unto the law of ſin and death, in the foregoing verſe; under which bondage he groaned for deliverance, and for the obtaining of it, looked upon death as the only means conducible. The Saints are ſubject to ſin while they are in the body, becauſe ſin receiveth its power from the corruption of nature not wholly mortified in this life; therefore called the law in the members, and the deeds of the body, *Rom.* 8. 13. *Our members that are upon earth*, Col. 3. 5. *And the luſts of the fleſh*, Gal 5. 24 But the death of the Saints is the death of their ſins, whereby they put off the whole

body of sin. O happy death, that brings the old man of sin to his grave, and the new man in grace to his glory and perfection! when the Soul shall be no more tempted unto sin, no more troubled with sin, but perfectly freed from all motions, lusts, and inclinations to that which is evil, by departing hence unto Christ.

Secondly, *What is it to be with Christ, unto whom the Saints are brought by their departing hence by death?* That none of the Fathers and Saints of the Old Testament were in heaven before Christs Ascension, is but a Popish fiction and delusion, contrary to the plain sence and express doctrine of the Scriptures, as may appear (to name no more) in those two remarkable instances of *Enoch* and *Elijah*, Gen. 5. 24. *And Enoch walked with God, and he was not, for God took him.* And of *Elijah* 2 Kings 2. 11. *And Elijah went up into heaven by a whirlwind.* But the question may be made, which I shall briefly answer, how these Patriarchs and Saints could be with Christ, when Christ was not yet incarnate, neither ascended into heaven.

For the Solution of this question, I shall only assert, and briefly prove, that though Christ was not in heaven before his incarnation

nation in his humane nature, yet he was there with the Godly departed, and they with him in his Divine nature. For the Divine nature of Chriſt being one with the Godhead of the Father, and the Spirit, as it was coeſſential, ſo it was coeternal. *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God, John* 1. 1. And when Chriſt was on earth he ſpeaketh of himſelf, as being at the ſame time alſo in Heaven, which muſt be underſtood of his Divine nature, *John* 1. 18. *No man hath ſeen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the boſome of the Father, hath declared him.* So alſo *John* 3. 13. *No man hath aſcended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of man, which is in Heaven.* And when he was to leave the world, in his prayer for himſelf, his Diſciples, and all believers, he thus petitioneth his Father, *John* 17. 5. *And now, O Father, glorifie thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.* But in what manner the Divine nature of Chriſt did put off its glory, during the time of his exinanition and humiliation upon earth, I ſhall not take upon me to inquire, much leſs to clear ſo great a Myſte-

ry; when being equal with God, he took upon him the form of a servant, having laid by his glory, as to the use of it in the mystery of our salvation, as learned *Beza* noteth *. But being out of all question, that Christ is now in Heaven in his divine and humane nature, and in both glorified, I return to shew you the Saints priviledge of being with Christ, and what it is to be with him at the *terminus ad quem* of the Souls motion in the state of Separation.

* *Hâc autem gloriâ (quod ad usum illius attinet in salutis nostræ mysterio) quodam modo seſe abdicaverat filius in servi formâ, durante suæ illius exinanitionis spatio.* Beza *in* Johan. 17. verse 5.

First, to be with Christ, is to be in the place where Christ is, or to be locally present with Christ: And that Christ is personally and locally in Heaven, I will not seem to suspect your faith, by being numerous in Scripture quotations, *Acts* 1. 11. The Angels say to the Disciples, *Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into Heaven? this same Jesus which is taken up from you into Heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him goe up into Heaven.* And *Peter* telleth the Jews, *Acts* 3. 21. *That the Heavens must receive him until*

the

the time of the reſtitution of all things. Stephen ſaw him in Heaven when he was ſuffering for him, *Acts* 7. 56. *Behold I ſee the Heavens opened, and the Son of man ſtanding at the right hand of God.* And the Apoſtle *Paul* layeth it down as an infallible truth to all beleivers, *Col.* 3. 1. *If ye be riſen with Chriſt, ſeek the things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God.* Now Chriſt hath told us, that *where he is, there we ſhall be alſo*, John 14. 2. *And if any man will ſerve me, let him follow me, and where I am, there ſhall alſo my ſervant be*, John 12. 26. Now is it not a deſirable, as well as a peculiar priviledge, to be with Chriſt? Chriſtian, waſt thou ne're affected in reading the Evangelicall ſtory of Chriſt, with the ſingular priviledge which the Diſciples of our Lord had, in their immediate attendance upon him, and continuance with him, to hear and ſee what they ſaw and heard, and to be his boſom friends and familiar companions? and didſt thou not wiſh in thy heart, that it might have been thy happy lot, to have been one of them? How much more comfortable and glorious will it be, to be with him in Heaven? The preſence of Chriſt on earth was a joyful preſence to the Diſciples, for

while

while the Bridegroome was with them they could not mourne, *Mat.* 9. 5. *But when he told them, that he ſhould be taken from them, their hearts were filled with ſorrow.* It was one of *Luthers* three wiſhes, that he might have ſeen Chriſt in the fleſh, *Paul* preaching, and primitive *Rome* in its flouriſhing condition. Content thy ſelf a while, thou precious ſoul, that loveſt him, and his appearance; thou ſhalt ſhortly ſee him with his Father, and thy Father, and abide with him for ever: and thou, that haſt been raviſhed with the ſweetneſs and powerful influence of his ſpiritual preſence in his Ordinances, wherein thou haſt had fellowſhip with the Lord, thou ſhalt in the end of thy dayes drink with him of the wine of the Kingdom of God, preſſed from the cluſters of the heavenly *Canaan.*

Secondly, to be with Chriſt is to be glorified with Chriſt, and to poſſeſs the ſame glory, which Chriſt hath with the Father. Chriſt chargeth *Mary*, who had the honour firſt to ſee him after his Reſurrection, to forbear his bodily preſence, ſaying, *touch me not, for I am not yet aſcended unto my Father*, John 20. 17. *But goe, and tell my brethren, and ſay unto them, I aſcend unto my*

my Father, and your Father, and to my God, and your God. And being aſcended, *he is ſet down at the right hand of the Majeſtie on High*, Heb. 1. 3. Or *on the right hand of the throne of the Majeſty in the Heavens*, Chap. 8. 1. *Now Chriſts throne ſhall be the Saints throne, as he hath promiſed*, Rev. 3. 21. *To him that overcometh, will I grant to ſit with me in my throne, even as I alſo overcame, and am ſet down with my Father in his throne.* Chriſt hath prayed his Father, and declared this as his Will to his Father, *John* 17. 24. *Father I will, that theſe whom thou haſt given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou haſt given me.* And ſhall they only be ſpectators of it? ſhall not the beholding of the glory of Chriſt in Heaven be as powerful to change the Saints into the ſame glory, as ſeeing his glorious Image? 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. For *we all with open face beholding, as in a glaſs, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image from glory to glory, even as by the ſpirit of the Lord*; or *as it may be rendred, even as by the Lord the Spirit, for the Lord is that ſpirit, v.* 17. And this is no leſs, then what Chriſt hath aſſured us of by his own grant, and promiſe unto us, *Joh.* 17. 22

And

And the glory which thou gaveſt me, I have given them that they may be one, as we are one. To ſhew you therefore, what this glory of Chriſt is, whereof every believer ſhall be a partaker with him: It is a ſpiritual and full poſſeſsion and enjoyment of God himſelf in perfect union and immediate communion with him. For ſo far as we can diſcern and underſtand things, ſo far above us and remote from us, in their nature and excellency, and as they are revealed unto our capacity in the Heavenly records of Divine writ, the glory of Heaven ſeemeth to be the higheſt degree of ſpirituality. God is preſented unto us *to be a ſpirit, John* 4.24. And if we cloth the nature of a ſpirit, with the Attributes of God, as they are made known unto us by himſelf, it is the higheſt conception we can have of him. For God is a Spirit, or a ſpiritual ſubſtance, moſt Holy, moſt Wiſe, Eternal, Infinite; as that holy and famous writer of ours hath deſcribed, or defined him. The Angels are Spirits, or miniſtring Spirits, *Heb.* 1. 14. The Souls of the Saints in Heaven are Spirits, the Spirits of juſt men made perfect, *Heb.* 12. 23. And if we may judge (as we ſay) the body by the foot, *ex pede Herculem*, or of the glory

of

of Heaven, and of the Soul, by the glory of the body, as it is already glorified in Chriſt, and others with him, or as it ſhall be glorified after the Reſurrection, even the body of all beleivers, it will appear ſtill, that the ſpirituality of the Heavenly ſtate is the glory of it. The Apoſtle *Paul* ſpeaking of Chriſts coming from hence to raiſe the body, and to glorifie it, ſaith *Phil* 3. 21. *That he ſhall change our vile body, and make it like unto his glorious body, by the power whereby he is able to ſubdue all things unto himſelf.* So that look what manner of body for glory Chriſts body now is in Heaven, ſuch ſhall our bodies be; and what the glory of his body is, appeareth by the ſpirituality of it after his Reſurrection, 1 *Cor.* 15. 44. *It is ſown a natural body, it is raiſed a ſpiritual body*, if not in ſubſtance, yet in quality. And if the nature of grace in the Saints on earth be ſpiritual, and the fruits of the ſpirit in them, conſtituting them a ſpiritual people, *Gal* 6. 1. Whereby they are bleſſed with ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places or things; it will follow that the ſtate of glory muſt be a ſpiritual ſtate for the ſoul, in a higher degree of ſpirituality, glory being grace *conſummate*,

as

as grace is glory *inchoate*. Now the ſoul is raiſed unto the glorious degree of perfection and ſpirituality in the heavenly preſence of Chriſt, by being fill'd with the fulneſs of God, and that by comprehending the highth, and length, and depth, and breadth of the love of God which here paſſeth knowledge, but is fully made known in Heaven by the beatifical viſion of God himſelf letting out his love without meaſure into the ſoul, whereby it is ſublimated, and transformed into the likeneſs of God, 1 *John* 3. 2. *For now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: but we know, that when he ſhall appear, we ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* We ſhall not ſee him only in his name, his word, and works, but in his nature, not his back parts, but his face. *Now we ſee through a glaſs darkely, but then face to face,* πρόσωπον πρὸς πρόσωπον, *now we know but in part, but then I ſhall know as I am known,* 1 *Cor.* 13. 12. This is the bleſſed reward of the pure in heart, that they ſhall ſee God, and without holineſs no man ſhall ſee him.

Thirdly, to be with Chriſt, is to be with them that are with Chriſt, and to have fellowſhip with the heavenly ſociety of

Angels

Angels and Saints in the preſence of Chriſt, *Heb.* 12. 22, 23. *Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and to the City of the living God, the heavenly* Hieruſalem, *and to an innumerable company of Angels, and to the general aſſembly and Church of the firſt born, which are written in heaven,-- and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect.* Firſt, to be with Chriſt, is to have ſociety with all the bleſſed Angels of God, who worſhip Chriſt in heaven, *Heb.* 1. 6. *He ſaith, let all the Angels worſhip him.* The ſight of Angels on earth, did ſometimes ſtrike fear into the hearts of Saints, and an apprehenſion of death into them: as when *Gideon* ſaw the Angel, *Judges* 6. 22. *When* Gideon *perceived he was an Angel of the Lord,* Gideon *ſaid, Alas, O Lord God, for becauſe I have ſeen an Angel of the Lord face to face, therefore he thought he muſt dye* as appeareth by the foregoing verſes. And ſo *Manoah,* when the Angel appeared unto him, & did wondrouſly, *Judges* 13. 23. Manoah *ſaid to his wife, we ſhall ſurely d e, becauſe we have ſeen God, or an Angel of God* for it is ſaid before, *Manoah* knew, that he was an Angel of God. But ſome of the Patriarchs and Saints entertained Angels with joy, as *Abraham* did the three Angels in the plain of

Mamre.

Mamre, Gen. 18. 8. who accepted his invitation, and did eat before him what he had dreſſed and provided for them. Likewiſe the two Angels which came to *Lot* in *Sodom*, Gen. 19. 1. *He made them a feaſt, and they ſtayed with him all night.* Surely that man is greatly honoured of God, unto whom in favour he thus ſendeth his Angels; which the Authour to the *Hebrews* maketh uſe of, as a motive unto Chriſtians to hoſpitality, *Heb.* 13. 2. *Be not forgetful to entertain ſtrangers, for thereby ſome have entertained Angels unawares.* What will that honour be then to the Saints in heaven, to be entertained with Angels, and to dwell with Angels, and to have familiarity and fellowſhip with an innumerable company of glorious Angels, yea with thoſe Angels that have been made miniſtring Spirits for their good! *Heb.* 1. 14. Are not they miniſtring ſpirits ſent forth to miniſter for them, who ſhall be heirs of ſalvation? with thoſe Angels that rejoyced at their converſion, *Luke* 15. 10 *I ſay unto you*, ſaith *Chriſt*, *that there is joy in the preſence of the Angels of God over one ſinner, that repenteth.* Yet this is not all, beleivers after death ſhall not only be, and dwell with the Angels in heaven, but be alſo as the Angels

Angels of God, *Matth.* 22. 30. They shall live as Angels; without these earthly comforts, and comfortable relations, they shall neither marry nor give in marriage; they shall be like the Angels themselves, moving up and down as the Angels, and joyning in consort with the whole Quire of Angels, in singing *Hallelujahs* to him that sitteth upon the throne of eternal Majesty.

Secondly, they shall have full and perpetual fellowship with glorified Saints, and Spirits of just men made perfect. Communion with Saints on earth in Gospel fellowship, whereby believers enjoy the comfort of the unity of the spirit each with other in spiritual administrations, is one of their great priviledges in Christ; which the Apostle exhorteth the *Ephesians* to maintain and *keep in the bond of peace*, Eph. 4. 1. Which he also urgeth as a motive to the believing *Philippians*, to persevere in mutual love and concord; *Phil.* 2. 1, 2. *If there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* Yet there is a great defect in the

ſociety of Chriſtians one with another here below, beſides the intermiſſions thereof; partly through difference in judgement and opinion, whereby their affections are in a great meaſure quenched and withdrawn each from other; and partly through corruption of nature, and occaſional offences, depriving them of the mutual benefit and advantage of each others gifts and graces. However let not theſe accidental inconveniences and obſtructions beget in you low and mean thoughts of this holy fellowſhip; but remember how your hearts have been warmed, your affections quickned, your reſolutions confirmed, and your hands ſtrengthened, by the preſence, and cloſe and ſpiritual communion ye have had with the people of God in the myſteries of Chriſt; that your eſteem may be preſerved, and your love ſo far increaſed, as to abound more and more to the precious Sons of *Sion*, and coheirs with you of the everlaſting inheritance: Conſidering that ye ſhall ſhortly live together with Chriſt, when ye ſhall enjoy the ſociety of all the faithful that are with him, thoſe whom ye have never ſeen, but have loved in the ſpirit, upon the reports of their graces; with the Patriarchs and Prophets, and the

cloud of witneſſes gone before you, and all that ſhall beleive in Chriſt to the end of the world; and what a joyful meeting will there be of the children of God, when they ſhall dwell together in their Fathers houſe, being made perfectly one, as God and Chriſt are one! What a ſolemn aſſembly will there be in heaven, in the preſence of God himſelf, when the whole Church of the firſt-born ſhall keep a perpetual Sabbath, and God ſhall be all in all. And how magnificent and glorious will be the heavenly Feſtivals of the righteous, in celebrating the marriage of the Lamb, when they ſhall all come together, and ſit down with *Abraham*, and *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, in the Kingdom of God.

Fourthly and laſtly, To be with Chriſt, is to have eternal life with Chriſt, for Chriſt giveth his ſheep eternal life, and they ſhall never periſh, *John* 10. 28. *And this is his promiſe, which he hath promiſed us, even eternal life*, 1 John 2. 25. *Therefore*, ſaith *Paul*, *we know, that if our earthly houſe of this tabernacle were diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, eternal in the heavens*, 2 Cor. 5. 1. This is no other then the Fathers houſe, which is built upon eternal founda-

tions, an everlaſting rock, the rock of ages; the eternal Godhead, and the unchangeable eſſence of God himſelf is the ſupport of it. There is nothing properly eternal, but the divine nature; for as time is the meaſure of motion, and the continuance of ſucceſſive and changeable creatures, ſo eternity is the immenſurable duration of the immutable eſſence of God, who only is from everlaſting to everlaſting, without ſhadow of turning, or the leaſt variation in being. So that the Saints ſhall receive, and enjoy their eternal life and happineſs with Chriſt, by the eternity of God himſelf, who is the only true God, and eternal life, 1 *John* 5. 20. *As their life is hid with Chriſt in God*, Col. 3. 3. *So it is communicated unto them through Chriſt, who lived by the Father, and now liveth with the Father, and that for evermore*, Rev. 1. 18. *I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore; And because I live, ye ſhall live alſo*, John 14. 19. Nay, beloved, this eternal life is begun already in your hearts, by the ſpirit of God in you, as a well of water ſpringing up to eternal life, *John* 4. 14. *By the knowledge of the true God, and Jeſus Chriſt, which is life eternal*, John 17. 3. *And by faith in Chriſt*,

John

John 6.47. *He that beleiveth on me hath everlaſting life.* But your full poſſeſſion thereof ſhall be after the diſſolution of the tabernacles of your mortal bodies, when ye ſhall never ſuffer a change more, ſo as to ſee any weakneſs, or the leaſt inclination to corruption; *Then mortality ſhall be ſwallowed up of life*, 2 Cor. 5 4 As the drop is ſwallowed up in the ocean, and the ſmall duſt in the huge mountaine, ſo ſhall the ſhort moment of this preſent life be forgotten, when the bright morning of eternal joy ſhall break upon your ſouls, and the righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun in the Kingdom of the Father. This is that life and immortality, which is brought to light through the Goſpel, 2 *Tim.* 1. 10. Wherfore gird up the loynes of your mind, be ſober and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt, unto whom ye are haſtening, waiting for the day of your departing hence, that ye may be with Chriſt, which is far better.

Thirdly, *How doth the death of the Saints bring them immediatly to Chriſt at their departure? & in what manner doth the ſoul depart?*

The Apoſtle joyneth his departing and being with Chriſt together by a ſmall copu-

lative particle, as if the ſoul were as ſoon with Chriſt after diſſolution, as we can ſpeak ſo ſhort a word, even in the next moment: which is the third general head to be handled. In the explaining whereof, I ſhall take it for granted, that the ſoul is immortal, and dyeth not with the body, but immediately appeareth before God, according to the apprehenſion of St. *Paul* in my text, who therefore deſired to depart, that he might be with Chriſt. For were not the ſoul immortal, and that in *Pauls* perfect judgement, it had been far better for him to have lived then dyed; for to him to live was Chriſt, but in caſe he had dyed, he could not have been with Chriſt, according to his deſire, had not his ſoul ſurvived his body. Therefore ſubſcribing to the judgement of ſo great an Apoſtle, I ſhall wave the needleſs controverſie, and proceed to the explication of this laſt queſtion in hand; the truth and manner whereof will appear in theſe following demonſtrations.

I. *Demonſt.* Firſt, the Souls of the Saints are ſpiritually and inſeparably united unto Chriſt. *He that is joyned to the Lord, is one ſpirit*, 1 Cor. 6. 17. The ſpirit of Chriſt dwelleth in beleivers; and though the body be dead, or mortall, becauſe

cause of sin, yet the spirit is life, because of righteousness, *Rom.* 8. 10, 11. The spirit of Christ in the soul is a principle of eternal life, by conjunction of the soul with Christ, whereby we are quickned together with him, through which both our spiritual and eternal life is secured, the union of the soul with Christ being inviolable. Therfore our life is said to *be hid with Christ in God*, Col. 3. 3. *and is out of all danger of ever being separated; for *who* or *what shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus?* Rom. 8. latter end, *I am perswaded, saith* Paul, *neither life, nor death*, &c. As the hypostatical union of the Godhead, and humanity of Christ, could not be separated by his death, so neither the mystical and spiritual union between Christ and the soul, by the death of the Saints: For he is the head of his body the Church, whereof every true believer is a living member, unto whom they are so really, spiritually, and immediately united, that no state, condition, or power whatsoever can sever or dis-joyn them. And though every unfruitful branch may and shall be taken away, and cut off from Christ the true vine, by final

* *Cum Christo & in Deo est extra periculum esse.* Calv.

Apoſtaſie, Eccleſiaſtical cenſure, or the judicial ſentence that ſhall paſs upon every hypocrite, when God ſhall require, and take away his ſoul; every true and living branch ſhall abide in him for ever, through the skill and care of the Father, the great husbandman: And if we conſider the relation, which Chriſt ſtandeth in to all the Saints, of a husband to his ſpouſe, contracted together by an everlaſting covenant, betrothed in loving kindneſs and faithfulneſs, and joyned together by the eternal ſpirit of grace, through which they enjoy the ſweet embraces and mutual expreſsions of their conjugal union and affections; how can it be imagined, that the Spouſe of Chriſt, or any particular Chriſtians, ſhould by their diſſolution be deprived of ſo neat a relation and firm union; for the ſoul being a ſpirit, and uncapable of ſuffering the leaſt alteration in its eſſence by the death of the body, from which it is only ſeparated as the life thereof, it muſt of neceſſity retaine, and ſtill poſſeſs its ſpiritual beauty, and all ſupernatural, and heavenly priviledges in and with Chriſt, whereof it is far more capable, and that more fully and perfectly, to receive, being ſeparate, then in the preſent body.

II. *De-*

II. *Demonſtr.* Secondly, the ſouls of believers are by a natural force and neceſſity detained from their deſired preſence with Chriſt, while they are preſent in the body: and thus the death of the Saints bringeth them to Chriſt, by releaſing their ſouls from the tyes and bonds of an abſented eſtate. *Therefore are we alwayes confident*, ſaith the Apoſtle, *knowing, that whilſt we are at home in the body, we are abſent from the Lord; we are confident, I ſay, and willing, rather to be abſent from the body, and preſent with the Lord*, 2 Cor. 5. 6, 8. The body is the Saints natural home, wherein, by a natural neceſſity, they are kept abſent from Chriſt; and yet a forced abſence, in regard of their deſires to be with him, and to change their bodily home for an eternal houſe. The Philoſophers called the body *anime carcerem & piſtrinum*, the priſon and gaol of the ſoul; if ſo, how welcome ſhould death be to the righteous, that ſetteth this priſoner free, and enlargeth the ſouls confinement! But how the ſoul, being ſet at liberty and delivered from the natural bond and relation to the body, is immediately preſent with Chriſt, I ſhall explain with what clearneſs and brevity I can, for the making

good of this ſecond Demonſtration.

Firſt, the ſoul and body in the Godly, as in all other men, are joyned together by the God of nature, in the creation of them, as eſſential parts of one perſon; the humane nature conſiſting of body and ſoul, which God himſelf breathed into the humane and organical body, and whereby man became a living ſoul, *Gen.* 2. 7. It is alſo a received maxime in natural ſcience, that, in the propagation of the humane nature, the ſoul of man is immediately created, and that not out of the body, but in the body, into which it is infuſed in the very creation of it; and ſo one man is ſaid to beget another, not that he doth generate the ſoul, but the body, and the union of both; God concurring as the firſt and univerſal cauſe, with the ſecondary and particular cauſes, in their natural acts and motions. Which union of the ſoul and body being natural, as of two eſſential parts of the whole, though the ſoul being a ſpirit hath a ſubſiſtence, being ſeparate from the body by diſſolution, yet it is but a ſeparate part, and remaineth as a part during the time and continuance of its ſeparation, having a natural inclination to be re-united to its own body, without

out which it cannot be perfectly happy, though in heaven it ſelf, in all degrees; for notwithſtanding the fulneſs of the glory of God in heaven, whereof it is partaker, in the preſence of Chriſt, yet being but a part, it wants the natural perfection of its relation, and receiveth its happineſs and glory but according to the meaſure of a part, waiting for the redemption of its body. Whence we may conclude, that the natural ſtate and condition of the ſoul of every man is to be in the body, and there it is in its proper habitation, as the Apoſtle ſaith, we are at home in the body, 2 *Cor.* 5. 6. So that how ſtrange ſoever the deſire of a gracious ſoul may be, to be with Chriſt, and to be abſent from the body by departing hence; yet it is naturally and neceſſarily detained, till the death of the body leave it free, as in a be-widdowed eſtate, to remove to Chriſt its wellbeloved, and to the Father of ſpirits, for a time to viſit thoſe manſions, wherein it ſhall abide for ever in the fulneſs of glory, with the aſſumed body made more ſuitable and ſpiritual for it at the reſurrection. It appeareth alſo from hence, that it is no leſs then wilful murther, and conſequently a breach of a great command,

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voluntarily to endeavour or haſten the diſſolution of theſe two united parts of body and ſoul; nature and grace commanding and commending the uſe of all lawful meanes, and that by phyſick, as well as food, and other natural helpes, to preſerve this preſent life, until God, in the courſe of providence, ſhall make a ſeparation.

Secondly, Believers while they are in the body are abſent from the Lord Chriſt, both in reſpect of local diſtance, and alſo of the nature and manner of their communion with him. For Chriſt is in heaven and they upon earth, and their communion with him now, though it be ſpiritual and joyful, yet it is weak and darke in compariſon of an immediate preſence; For we walk by faith, not by ſight, 2 *Cor.* 5. 7. Which faith being the ſubſtance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not ſeen, begetteth in the heart a fervent love, and an unſpeakable joy in an abſent and unſeen Saviour, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. *Whom having not ſeen ye love, in whom, though now ye ſee him not, yet believing, ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory.* Nevertheleſs the communion the Saints have with Chriſt, through faith and hope in him,

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is but weak and dark here, in compariſon of what ſhall be in heaven, when they ſhall be with him; and theſe graces appropriate to this preſent life and ſtate, ſhall ceaſe through immediate viſion and fruition, whereby their love ſhall be perfect in the preſence of its object. For faith apprehendeth Chriſt by ſpiritual knowledge, which is the ſight in the eye of faith; and the higheſt degree of knowledge the ſoul is capable of here in heavenly things, is but obſcure to what it ſhall be hereafter. What we ſee through many mediums, is but darkely ſeen; and though mediums may be helpful to natural ſight, in caſe of weakneſs of the organ, or diſtance of the object, yet ſuch a ſight falls ſhort of a ſtrong and clear inſpection of ſomething near at hand, and at a due diſtance. Thus it is in regard of the ſouls apprehenſion and knowledge of ſpiritual things, which being at a great diſtance, and far remote in their nature and perfection, we look at them, as through a glaſs, and that darkely, 1 Cor. 13. 12. *For we know in part, and we propheſie in part, and now ſee through a glaſs darkely, but then face to face.* We ſee the things of God and of heaven through the glaſs of the Word and Sacraments,

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and the glaſs of the workes of Providence, in which glaſſes we may be ſaid to ſee theſe things alſo, as by reflexion of their image, according to that other expreſſion of *Paul*, 2 Cor. 3. 18. For, *we all with open face, beholding as in a glaſs the glory of the Lord, are changed into the ſame Image:* this alſo is darke in reſpect of the light of the naked face, or ſubſtantial glory of Chriſt, in a direct line, and without reflexion; for though it be with open face, the vail of natural ignorance and blindneſs being taken away, yet it is not face to face in the appearance of Chriſt nakedly and immediately unto us. But what this darkneſs of knowledge is in this life, I ſhall in a few words more explain. The myſteries of heaven, and of God, and Chriſt, are revealed unto us in the Scriptures, according to our capacity of underſtanding them; and the Lord condeſcending to the nature of man, ſpeaketh unto us after the manner of man. Now the nature and kind of knowledge, which is proper unto us, is not intuitive, but diſcurſive; the rational ſoul uſing the organs and ſenſes of the body, for the attaining of its knowledge and underſtanding: So that we know all things in a ſenſible manner, according to

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the firſt *ſpecies* and impreſſions made in the underſtanding, which it receiveth from the ſenſes, and from thence the underſtanding, by diſcourſe, and reaſon, formeth the notions of ſpiritual and inſenſible beings. And hence it is, that in moſt things that incurre not immediately into the ſenſes, our knowledge is ſo darke and dubious, that in natural ſcience we agree not, but diſpute principles themſelves. In like manner, God revealeth ſpiritual and inviſible things, and the great myſteries of the Goſpel unto us, wherein he ſpeaketh our language, and preſenteth heavenly things unto us in earthly formes: as when he revealeth and deſcribeth himſelf, it is as having the members of our bodies and the paſſions of our minds, which we are to underſtand figuratively, and not literally, leaſt we become guilty of blaſphemous thoughts, and carnal apprehenſions of God. And thus when our Saviour inſtructed *Nicodemus* in the myſtery of grace, and converſion to God, he telleth him, he muſt be born again, *John* 3. 5. *Nicodemus* underſtood him at firſt literally, and rather wondred then believed; wherefore Chriſt reproveth him, verſe 13. *If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe*

eive not, how ſhall ye believe, if I tell you of heavenly things. Not that regeneration is an earthly thing, though it muſt be a ſtate upon earth, and wrought while we are here: but Chriſts meaning is, if I have ſpoken to you of theſe heavenly and ſpiritual things in an earthly manner and ſenſitive way, by parables and ſimilitudes, and yet ye underſtand me not, ſo as to beleive; how ſhall ye beleive, if I ſpeak in a ſpiritual and heavenly Dialect and Language? Now if we underſtand heavenly things only, as they are revealed (for they are therefore ſo revealed, that we might underſtand them) what dark and low, what ſhort and weak apprehenſions have we of them? Therefore a gracious ſoul deſireth to be abſent rather from the body and preſent with Chriſt, that it might fully know and underſtand the hidden things of eternity, and hear ſuch words, with *Paul* in the third heaven, which are unutterable, and therefore could not tell whither he was in the body, or out of the body, 2 *Cor.* 12. 2, 3, 4. *I knew a man in Chriſt above fourteen years agoe, whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth: Such a man, one caught up to the*

third

third heaven, and I knew ſuch a man (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell, God knoweth) how that he was caught up into Paradiſe, and heard unſpeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Hence it appeareth, that there is an incapacity in humane nature, in the preſent ſtate thereof, to apprehend and expreſs the glory of heaven in the preſence of Chriſt; and therefore it is probable *Paul* was out of the body during this revelation unto him, for he repeateth thoſe words twice, whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell. But which of the two it was at that time, it mattereth not ſo much, in that he is ſo clear in the Text, that for the attaining of ſuch a condition, he abſolutely declareth his deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, which all Chriſtians conclude with him to be far better.

Thirdly, the ſouls and ſpirits of the Saints looſed and ſeparated from the body, are ſwift and inſtantaneous in their motion to their appointed and deſired place of bliſs and happineſs. For the motion of Spirits, they being without material and corporeal parts, cannot be ſucceſſive, and ſo meaſured by time, and therefore it is in an inſtant. As the motions of Angels from

heaven to earth, and from earth to heaven, are in an inſtant, ſo the motion of the ſoul from the natural body to the preſence of Chriſt in heaven, is alſo in an inſtant. But to ſpeak alſo to every ordinary capacity, and to the unlearned, as well as learned in ſuch natural principles, I ſhall illuſtrate this truth by Scripture inſtances and ſimilitudes. *The Angel* Gabriel *was cauſed to flye ſwiftly unto* Daniel, *when he was ſpeaking in prayer*, Dan. 9. 21. Where the motion of an Angel is ſet forth by the notion of the fowles of the air, that flye and move exceeding ſwiftly. And becauſe ſuch motions of ſpirits are not diſcernable by ſenſe, but are only to be conceived by the mind; for the help of ſuch a conception, I ſhall propoſe the motion of body and ſoul together in ſome, that did viſibly aſcend into heaven. As that of *Elijah* who aſcended up to heaven in the ſight of *Eliſha*, 2 Kin. 2. 11, 12. *And it came to paſs, as they ſtill went on and talked, that behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horſes of fire, and parted them both aſunder, and* Elijah *went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And* Eliſha *ſaw it, and he cryed, my Father, my Father, the chariot of* Iſrael, *and the horſemen thereof, and he ſaw him no more.* We

must

muſt conceive here, that *Elijah* was in an inſtant, or in the twinckling of an eye, transformed out of the natural qualities of his earthly body, and changed into ſpiritual; in which condition he was ſuddenly carried up into heaven. And the ſwiftneſs of his motion in aſcending appeareth in this Scripture, in that it is compared to the motion of fire; there appeared a chariot of fire, and horſes of fire. Now fiery motions, or the motions of fire, are exceeding ſwift, as the motion of light, or of lightnings from Eaſt to Weſt, in a moment. He is ſaid likewiſe to go up to heaven by a whirl-wind. The wind is exceeding ſwift, as well as ſtrong in its motion; therefore God is ſaid to flye upon the wings of the wind, *Pſal.* 18. 10. And of all winds none ſo ſwift as the whirlwind. Neither is it to be neglected, that *Elijah* cryed after him, my Father, my Father, as if he were preſently taken out of his ſight. The like inſtance we have of our Saviour, when he aſcended up into heaven in the view and preſence of his Diſciples, *Acts* 1. 9. *While they beheld, he was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their ſight.* In both theſe inſtances we cannot but imagine, that both Chriſt

and *Elijah* were quickly, or in a moment, at the end of their heavenly journey. And if the motion of a ſpiritual or glorified body be ſo ſwift, how much more the motion of a ſeparate ſoul, which is a pure Spirit? Finally, we may in ſome degree apprehend the motion of the ſoul in its eſſence by the motion of its faculties: and how ſoon the ſoul can be in heaven and with God and Chriſt in its thoughts, we may judge by the ſpiritual and ſudden ejaculations of the heart, whereby heavenly Chriſtians are often and ſecretly aſcending and deſcending between heaven and earth, and God and their worldly imployments.

Laſtly, Chriſt in heaven is the center of all ſanctified and gracious ſouls, unto whoſe preſence they tend in their ſeparate motion. Though the Divine nature, or God-head be the center of all things, as the cauſe and fountaine of all beings; yet becauſe the glory of God is not every where alike manifeſted, but in heaven, where Chriſt is perſonally preſent, even at the right hand of God, therefore the terme and center of the ſouls motion after ſeparation is immediately unto him. As Chriſt is the immediate object and term of our ſpiritual approaches

unto the throne of Grace, by whom we have acceſs unto the Father, and that by a new and living way conſervated through the vail of his fleſh: So the humanity of Chriſt being finite, upon which our thoughts are firſt placed, doth more eaſily ſtay and fix the ſoul, then the infinite eſſence of the Divine nature, which being incomprehenſible doth rather ſwallow up and overwhelm our weak faculties. Therefore *Bernard* opening that Text of *Solomon*, Prov. 25. 27. according to the Hebrew, from which our tranſlation too much varieth, exhorteth Chriſtians not to gaze too long upon the Divine Majeſtie, leaſt they be overcome of the glory; as to eat much honey is clogging to the ſtomack. And as the Saints before Chriſt's incarnation prayed towards the temple, the type of Chriſt, where the preſence of God viſibly manifeſted did in ſome meaſure contract and limit the omnipreſence of God to their hearts and apprehenſions in worſhipping of him. In like manner Chriſt in heaven is the fixed period, term and center of the Souls motion and approach to its glorious and heavenly ſtate; through whom and with whom we are glorified together, as coheirs of God with him.

Therefore *Paul* deſired to depart, and to be with Chriſt, that is, to depart unto Chriſt, as the *terminus ad quem*, or center of his ſoul in departing. As *Stephen* when he was ſtoned called upon God, ſaying, *Lord Jeſus receive my ſpirit*, Acts 7. 59. As the ſtone moveth naturally down-ward to the earth, ſo a gracious ſoul moveth upward to Chriſt, who is the center of the Saints, as he is the head of the body, the corner ſtone of the building, the rock of their ſtrength, the fountain of all fulneſs, and their everlaſting reſt and peace. But to conclude this ſecond Demonſtration. As natural things tend to their center, by a direct motion, ſo the ſouls of all believers, are directed in their motion to Chriſt at diſſolution, by the Miniſtery of Angels; as in the Parable of *Lazarus*, *Luke* 16. 22. *And it came to paſs, that the beggar dyed, and was carried by the Angels into* Abraham's *boſome*. Whether the ſoul be carried by Angels, only by conducting it in its motion, as we are ſaid to carry a friend to an unknown place, by directing in the way: or whether by aſſiſtance in the motion, and defence, they being mighty in power, it is not much material to determine, ſince the ſoul moving according to the motion

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of its Angelical guides and companions is in an instant brought unto Christ its desired end and rest.

III. *Demonst.* Thirdly, All the Saints stand in near and unchangeable relations unto Christ, through regeneration and spiritual adoption unto God; the full comfort and priviledge whereof they cannot enjoy, while they are present in the body. So that though death parteth the nearest friends, and dearest relations on earth, yet it bringeth heavenly and spiritual relations together. The force of relation is very strong, relations being of the least entity, but the strongest efficacy; witness the strong affections and cords of love, whereby persons naturally related are tyed to each other. What bowels have Parents towards their Children, and Children again unto them? What indeared affections between loving yoke-fellowes? And how strong is the bond of brotherly love? All which long after, and endeavour the mutual presence each of other. Such are the relations, and much more powerful, between Christ and every beleiver. Not only God himself, but Christ is their Father, and they his children, *Isa.* 9. 6. *His Name shall be called the everlasting Father,*

the Prince of peace. He is their Husband, and they his Spouſe: 2 Cor. 11. 2. *I have eſpouſed you to one husband, that I might preſent you as a chaſt Virgin unto Chriſt. He is their Brother, and they his Brethren, unto whom they are conformed,* Rom. 8. 29. *That he might be the firſt-born among many brethren.* Many other relations are mentioned in the Scriptures between them; he is their King, and they his Subjects; their Captain, and they his Souldiers; their Friend, and they his Favourites, their Lord and Maſter, and they his Servants; and their Shepherd, and they his Flock. And what engagements and affections ſoever there are in any or all theſe relations in the Bond of nature, there is much more in Chriſt and the Saints, through the God of Grace, and the powerful efficacy of the Spirit of Chriſt that dwelleth in them. But yet being abſent from each other, while beleivers are preſent in the body, they deſire to depart, that they may be with him. And what a joyful greeting there is in heaven at the meeting of them, let the Angels of heaven declare, who are eye witneſſes thereof. Welcome then that day and hour, when the meſſenger of death ſhall call, and bring the children to

their

their Fathers houſe, their Spouſe to her Beloved, and the Sons of God to the firſt begotten: When the loyall Subjects of Chriſt ſhall be crowned, and the ſpiritual Souldiers receive the price of their reward; when the true friends of Chriſt ſhall enjoy their Redeemer, who loved them to the death; and the faithful Servants ſhall enter into the joy of their Lord; when the ſheep ſhall return to their Shepherd, who hath given unto them eternal life, that they ſhould never periſh.

IV. *Demonſtr.* Fourthly, the greateſt promiſes made to beleivers in the covenant of Grace, are of the life to come, which they cannot inherit till they depart, and are with Chriſt. *Thus Godlineſs is profitable to all things, having promiſe of the life that now is, and of that which is to come,* 2 Tim. 4. 8. The Saints are heires of great and precious promiſes, which are ſummed up in that general promiſe of eternal life, 1 John 2. 21. *This is the promiſe which he hath promiſed us, even eternal life.* Which promiſe, and all the promiſes of God, are yea and amen in Chriſt, the Mediator of the Covenant eſtabliſhed upon better promiſes: Through which, though the heires of promiſe have ſtrong conſolation in regard

gard of the immutability of God and his counſel and oath, wherein it is impoſſible that he ſhould lye, yet moſt of them are yet in hope, and not in hand, and therefore through patience they wait for them, till they come to Chriſt, the heir of all things, with whom they are joynt-heires; bearing up their hearts in the mean time with the hope ſet before them, *Heb.* 6. 19, 20. *Which hope we have* (ſaith the Apoſtle) *as an anchor of the ſoul both ſure and ſtedfaſt, and which entreth into that within the veil, whither the forerunner is for us entred, even Jeſus made an High-Prieſt for ever after the order of* Melchiſedech. Thus beleivers wait in hope for what they ſee not, and receive not in this preſent life; as the Patriarchs, *Heb.* 11. 13. *Who dyed in the faith, not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſwaded of them, and imbraced them, and confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims upon earth.* Therefore, beloved, *be not ſlothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promiſes*, Heb. 6. 12. *For ye have need of patience* (ſaith the ſame Apoſtle) *that after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promiſe*, Heb. 10. 36. Which promiſe is no other then the

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Crown of life and righteouſneſs, which Chriſt the righteous Judge ſhall give unto all thoſe that love his appearing.

Thus we have ſhewed you, though in a weak meaſure, the glorious priviledge of the Godly in their death, in that their death bringeth them immediately unto Chriſt, according to my Text, *For I am in a ſtraight betwixt two, having a deſire to depart, and to be with Chriſt, which is far better.*

I am come at length to the Application of this Doctrine and Subject; and that I may be profitable to all, and divide the word of God, ſo, as to give every one his portion, I ſhall weild this Text as a two-edged Sword, ſtriking both wayes, to the godly and ungodly, to Saints and ſinners, to beleivers and unbeleivers.

Uſe. I. Firſt it may ſerve to inform us from hence, of the ſad, miſerable, and woful ſtate, of every carnal, ſinful and Chriſtleſs ſoul, that ſhall dye in ſuch a condition. It were happy for wicked men, if they might never dye, but for ever enjoy the mean portion of creature comforts, which they have in this world, though they are infinitely ſhort of the glory and happineſs of the Godly with Chriſt in heaven. But

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to have your portion here, and that for ſo ſhort a ſeaſon, as the time of this preſent life onely, how inconſiderable is it to the eternity of the Saints felicity with Chriſt, and the eternity of your own miſery in Hell torments? Therefore Chriſt in the parable bringeth in *Abraham* thus ſpeaking to the rich man in Hell, *Luke* 16. 25. *Son remember, that thou in thy life time receivedſt thy good things, and likewiſe* Lazarus *evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.* The Prophet *David* alſo praying for deliverance from his enemies, deſcribeth them by their temporal bleſſings, *Pſal.* 17. 13, 14. *Deliver my ſoul from the wicked, which is thy ſword, from men, which are thy hand, O Lord, from the men of the world, which have their portion in this life.* Let not therefore the people of God envy the proſperity of the wicked; for they have but the crumbs and broken meat that your heavenly Father giveth to ſtrangers and enemies, yea to Doggs, for ſo the Scripture calleth the wicked, *Rev.* 22. 15. *Without are Doggs, and Sorcerers, and Whore-mongers, and Murderers, and Idolaters, and whatever loveth and maketh a lye.* And let the fear of death bridle and reſtrain the rage and riot of all prophane

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perſons; conſidering how ſoon your preſent joyes ſhall be at an end, and your endleſs ſorrowes commence, when God ſhall lay your honour in the duſt, and require your ſouls from you. Why tremble ye not at the ſight of an incloſed corpſe, and the open grave before your eyes? Ye alſo ſhall ſurely dye, O ye covetous worldlings, wretched drunkards, prophane ſwearers, unclean adulterers! ye proud and gaudy vanities, put your heads into the duſt, and ſtretch forth your hands and feel thoſe cold and dry skulls and bones, and lay it to heart before ye lye down in ſorrow. And for the awakening of your ſleepy conſciences, who look and ſee no further, then to what is obvious to your ſenſes, like a brutiſh people, and a generation of ſottiſh and fooliſh men; give me leave to deal faithfully with you, according to my preſent deſign, in ſhewing you, what is on t'other ſide the Grave, and the deplorable eſtate of every carnal heart in death, as ſoon as the ſoul hath taken its leave of its ſinful body and houſe of clay.

First, Every wicked and ungodly ſoul is miſerable in death, in that it is deprived of the happineſs of heaven, and the glory thereof in the preſence of Chriſt; for as it is the Saints priviledge in death to depart

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unto Chriſt, ſo on the contrary it is part of every ſinners puniſhment to depart from him, *Matth.* 7. 23. *Depart from me, ye that work iniquity.* How will your hopes periſh, and your hearts break, when ye ſhall find heaven gate ſhut upon you, and Chriſt himſelf deny your knockings and intreaties with *I know you not. Matth.* 25. 12. *Be not deceived any longer, but know that neither fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abuſers of themſelves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, ſhall inherit the kingdom of God,* 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. And ſuch are ſome of you. Friends, what think ye of periſhing, and being baniſhed from the preſence of the Lord and the glory of his power? when ye ſhall weep and gnaſh your teeth becauſe ye ſhall ſee *Abraham* and *Iſaac* and *Jacob*, and *all the Prophets in the Kingdom of God*, and *your ſelves ſhut out*, Luke 13. 28. *Ye ſhall ſee indeed the righteous, whom ye have deſpiſed*, and perſecuted, and reproached, ſolacing themſelves in their full plenty, and rejoycing in their everlaſting inheritance, all the treaſures of heaven being opened unto them; but ye ſhall not be able to paſſe that μέγα χάσμα, or great gulf of ſeparation, that is and ſhall be fixed between them

them and you, ſo as to approach their preſence, or to partake of their joyes. *Auguſtine* moveth a queſtion, why the rich man could ſee *Lazarus* in *Abrahams* boſome, and *Lazarus* could not ſee the rich man in hell? and he giveth this anſwer to it; becauſe he that is in the darke may ſee him that is in the light, but he that is in the light cannot ſee him that is in the dark. Heaven is a place of light through the preſence of the glory of God, and of Chriſt the Son of righteouſneſs, wherein all the righteous ſhall ſhine as the Sun, and therefore called the inheritance of the Saints in light, *Acts* 26. 18. But the ſtate of the wicked ſhall be darkneſs and blackneſs of darkneſs, a total deprivation of the light of the countenance of God, and the comfortable preſence thereof; from which they ſhall be driven into the remoteſt diſtance of place and condition; and therefore it is called σκότος ἐξώτερον outer darkneſs, *Mat.* 25. 30. *Caſt the unprofitable ſervant into outer darkneſs, there ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth.* And though this be the greateſt loſs imaginable, yet it is the leaſt of your woe, in regard of the torments ye ſhall ſuffer in the Lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone. And ſo I proceed from the

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puniſhment of loſs to the puniſhment of ſenſe and torment.

Secondly, Every wicked man ſhall be miſerable in his death, in reſpect of the ſtate of his ſoul, which death ſhall bring it unto without Chriſt. And the ſtate of a damned ſoul after death, and the manner of a ſinful ſoul entring into condemnation and torment after diſſolution may ſomewhat be diſcerned by theſe following ſteps and degrees. In opening whereof, I ſhall wholly wave the queſtion about the place of hell, and torment, as a nicety rather then a neceſſary Subject for ſerious Auditors.

Firſt, Every wicked and unbeleiving perſon dieth in the guilt of all his ſins unpardoned. Remiſsion of ſins is a priviledge peculiar to beleivers through faith in Chriſt Jeſus; faith being the condition of the promiſe, and the application of the death and righteouſneſs of Chriſt for juſtification, *Rom.* 3. 25, 26. *Whom God hath ſet forth to be a propitiation, through faith in his blood, to declare his righteouſneſs; for the remiſsion of ſins that are paſt, through the forbearance of God; that he might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him that believeth in Jeſus: But he that believeth not is con-*

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demned already, becauſe he hath not beleived in the Name of the only begotten Son of God, John 3. 18. So that unbelief leaveth the ſoul under the guilt of ſin, and ſealeth up the final condemnation thereof. Whereupon Chriſt telleth the unbelieving Jews, that they ſhould die in their ſins, *John* 8. 21,24. *Then ſaid Jeſus again unto them, I go my way, and ye ſhall ſeek me, and ſhall dye in your ſins: whither I go ye cannot come, I ſaid therefore unto you, that ye ſhall dye in your ſins; for if ye beleive not that I am he, ye ſhall dye in your ſins.* A wicked man carryeth all his ſins to the grave with him, which for number are as the hairs of his head, and for nature damnable and defiling; he dieth clothed and clogged with ſin; and the guilt of all his ſins that ever he committed in thought, word, or deed, cleave to his ſoul. It is dreadful to conſider, what a maſs and mountainous bigneſs the ſins of a poor carnal wretch ariſe unto if we lay them together: his original ſin, actual ſins, ſins of omiſſion and commiſſion, his ſecret ſins, and open and ſcandalous ſins; his whole life hath been a trade of ſin, and whatſoever proceedeth from him is ſin; the ploughing of the wicked is ſin, and his prayer is turned into ſin: And

to his own ſins perſonally committed, we may add his other mens ſins, either occaſioned, countenanced or allowed: Now multiply theſe by their particulars and individuals, and meaſure all by their ſinful circumſtances, and then judge of the guilt of every ſinful man, that dieth in unbelief, and without pardoning grace through the bloud of Chriſt.

Secondly, The conſcience of every wicked man is awakened immediately after death and diſſolution to a continual ſenſe of the guilt of all his ſins. Natural conſcience in carnal men is for the moſt part peaceable & ſilent in this preſent life; delight & cuſtome in ſin hardning the heart and ſearing the conſcience, which they labour to keep aſleep, by diverting the thoughts to worldly objects, or to ſatisfie, by a formal profeſſion attended with ſome outward performances. But as ſoon as ever the ſoul of an unregenerate perſon is ſeparate from the body, this lyon awaketh & ſleepeth no more, the faculties of the ſoul being alwayes in act and exerciſe, in a ſeparate ſtate, whereby his ſins ſhall be alwayes before him, and ſet in order before his eyes, upon which his conſcience ſhall reflect continually without diverſion, or intermiſſion.

miſſion. Then the ſins you have laboured to forget and caſt out of mind, ſhall be brought to remembrance, and ye ſhall ever behold them, for which conſcience ſhall charge and accuſe you, and in the freſh remembrance of them you ſhall lye down ſelf-condemned for ever. This is the worm that never dieth, *Mark.* 9 48. But ſhall gnaw your hearts to eternity.

Thirdly, Hereupon the ſoul of a wicked man ſhall tremble at the ſight and preſence of God. That the ſoul of every man, and conſequently of the wicked, ſhall ſee and approach the powerful and immediate preſence of God in his Divine nature and eſſence, upon their diſſolution, is apparent, in that the ſpirit of man is ſaid to go upward, *Eccleſ.* 3. 21. *And to return to God, who gave it*, Chap. 12. 7. As alſo by the particular judgement immediately conſequent upon death, whereby God appearing to conſcience, decideth and determineth the eternal ſtate and condition of every ſoul, preparative to the laſt and glorious appearing of Chriſt at the great and terrible day, who ſhall then judge the whole world, and the ſoul and body together. *For it is appointed unto men once to dye, and after this the judgement*, Heb. 9. 27.

Which may include this particular judgement after death, whereof we are ſpeaking, as well as the laſt and general judgement: yet ſome reſtrain it to the particular only. But in what manner the ſoul of a wicked man ſhall ſee God, take in a few words. Death being the unclothing and putting off off the earthly houſe of the body, the ſoul remaineth naked in reſpect of that clothing, which nakedneſs of the ſeparate ſouls of the Saints is covered and clothed upon with the glory of their houſe in heaven, 2 *Cor.* 5. 3. In which ſtate of nakedneſs, wherein the ſouls of the wicked abide, the ſoul muſt needs be quickly and powerfully apprehenſive of God, and of any impreſſion and influence of God upon it; as the body being naked of its clothing, is tenderly ſenſible of heat or cold, and any thing that approacheth unto it. For the ſoul being ſeparate from the body, receiveth its object no more through the ſenſes of the body, but in an immediate way of diſcovery of them. We know alſo that the Lord doth ſometimes immediately wound the ſpirit of man, while it is in the body, by letting fall the drops of wrath upon it, and thereby tormenteth it, which *David* calleth the rebukes of God, *Pſ.* 39. 11.

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When thou with rebukes doſt correct a man for iniquity, thou makeſt his beauty to conſume away like a moth. Moreover, if the ſoul being a ſpirit, and ſeparate from the body, can converſe with ſpirits, as the Saints with Angels, and the damned with Devils, much more with God the Father of ſpirits, who can diſcover himſelf unto them, as he pleaſeth. But take heed of miſtaking here; for though a gracious and and ſanctified ſoul reconciled unto God, hath to do with him, as a father, in the apprehenſion of his love, through which it hath comfort and joy in communion with him; yet it is not ſo with the ſinful ſoul of that man that dieth in his ſins; which apprehendeth God only, as he appeareth to it, in wrath and diſpleaſure, *for without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord*, that is, with peace and comfort, *Heb.* 12. 14. Now conſider, ye that forget God, can ye ſee and behold the wrath of his countenance? doe ye not tremble in your very thoughts of him? Surely the preſence of an angry God will make every guilty ſoul to fear and tremble at his feet, when they ſhall be brought before him by his Serjeant Death. The apprehenſion of guilt and of God together made *Adam* and *Eve* to run behind the

Trees for fear, when they heard the voice of God in the garden, *Gen.* 3. & *Moſes*, though a Favourite, yet when he ſaw the appearance of God in the thundrings and lightnings and earthquakes, the ſmoke and fire, & heard the ſound of the trumpet upon Mount *Sinai*, he ſaid, *I exceedingly fear and quake*, Heb. 12. 21. When *Elijah* apprehended God was in the ſtill ſmall voice, *he wrapped his face in his mantle, and went out, and ſtood in the entring of the cave*, 1 Kings 19. 13. When *Job* came to ſee God with his eyes, he *abhorred himſelf in duſt and aſhes*, Job 42. 6. The judgements of God made holy *Davids* fleſh to tremble, *Pſal.* 119. 120. *My fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, I am afraid of thy judgements.* The glorious viſion which *Iſaiah* ſaw, how did it work upon that holy Prophet? *Iſaiah* 6. 5. When he ſaw the Lord ſitting upon a throne, and cryed *woe is me, for I am undone, becauſe I am a man of unclean lips, & I dwell in the midſt of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have ſeen the King the Lord of Hoſts.* And if theſe Saints, ſo eminent for grace and holineſs, have trembled at the preſence of God manifeſted into them in love and mercy, how ſhall the ſinner and ungodly ſtand in his ſight? Doeſt thou beleive there is a God? If not,

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thou ſhalt ſee and beleive; but remember, that the Devils beleive and tremble.

Fourthly, The ſoul of a wicked man thus trembling before God, the holineſs of God breaketh forth in wrath upon the ſoul to puniſh & torment it. For the ſoul appearing before God in the guilt of all its ſins which are the greateſt contrariety & oppoſition againſt the holy nature of God, who cannot but glorifie himſelf, & vindicate his holineſs; the juſtice of God, in the execution of his infinite & unſatiable diſpleaſure, can no longer be ſuſpended, but ſtirreth up his fury as fire to prey upon the ſoul. Thus fitted for deſtruction: The day of patience is now over, wherein the Lord waited upon this ſoul, in the miniſtery of the Goſpel, & in the uſe of all means, to gain it in; wooing it by tenders of grace & mercy, & warning it, by foretelling this preſent miſery. What fair opportuuities & rich advantages, hath all wicked & ungodly wretches to prevent this condemnation, and to eſcape the wrath of God, while the glorious Goſpel of the great God is preaching to them; wherein grace is upon the knee, and mercy ſtretcheth forth her hands, Chriſt ſtandeth knocking at their hard hearts, and his meſſengers cry aloud to their deaf ears. No wonder therefore if now patience abuſed turn into fury,

mercy ſlighted ſtir up indignation, and contempt of favour heighten diſpleaſure, and hereby wrath is treaſured up againſt the day of wrath, *Rom.* 2. 4, 5. *Or deſpiſeſt thou the riches of his goodneſs, and forbearance, and long ſuffering, not knowing that the goodneſs of God leadeth thee to repentance, but after thy hardneſs and impenitent heart, treaſureſt up unto thy ſelf wrath againſt the day of wrath, and the revelation of the righteous judgement of God.* God is a conſuming fire to all ſuch dry and combuſtible ſouls, ſeizing upon them as ſtraw and ſtubble in their approach unto him; like *Nadab* and *Abihu*, when they offered ſtrange fire before the Lord, which he commanded them not, *Lev.* 10. 2. And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord. O that the ſinners in *Zion* were afraid, and that fear might ſurpriſe the hypocrites! Conſider, who among you ſhall dwell with the devouring fire, and who among you ſhall dwell with everlaſting burnings? The wrath of the Lord is the lake of fire and brimſtone of which the Scripture ſo often ſpeaketh; this is hell it ſelf, wherein God himſelf is the tormentor, who by his wrath kindleth thoſe unquencheable flames, *Iſa.* 30. 33. *For* Tophet *is ordain-*

dained of old, yea for the King it is prepared he hath made it deep and large: the pile thereof is much wood; the breath of the Lord like a ſtream of brimſtone kindleth it. In this Scripture the Lord denounceth hell to King *Sennacherib*, in deſcribing whereof the Prophet alludeth to the fires in the valley of *Hinnon*, wherein thoſe Idolaters burned their children in ſacrifice to *Moloch*; and that the parents might not hear the cry of their children, they beat up their tabrets or drummes: and from the name of *Toph* or drum, the place was called *Tophet*. So in hell there ſhall be no pitty or compaſſion of God to the cryes of burning ſouls. And this is the puniſhment of old ordained, not only for *Sennacherib*, but all the ungodly; which is ſaid to be deep and large. As the dimenſions of Gods love to his people in heaven are highth, length, depth, and breadth, in all which love paſſeth knowledge, ſo are the dimenſions of his wrath to the damned in hell, which we are not able to conceive; the heat whereof is intollerable, as of a fire made with much wood, and eternal, through the ſtream of wrath for ever flowing forth from God the fountaine of wrath to the wicked, the hot breath of whoſe mouth kindleth

kindleth and bloweth up the everlaſting flames of their endleſs ſorrow and torments.

Fifthly, the ſoul under this conſuming wrath of God lyeth down in everlaſting deſpair of ever being releaſed, or in the leaſt meaſure releived or eaſed. *Eternity* in torments maketh them unſupportable, though in themſelves they were not ſo heavy and burthenſome; how much more intollerable will that puniſhment be, that is both in nature, as well as duration, ſo inſufferable? And if the paines of wrath but for one hour in hell cannot be recompenſed with all the wealth of the world, who would venture the eternity thereof for the pleaſures of ſin, which are but for a ſeaſon? The damned in hell apprehend the endleſsneſs of their torments, by the immortality of the ſoul, the demerit of ſin, and the unchangeableneſs of God from whom they ſuffer. If the ſoul could be conſumed or annihilated by its torments, if ſin could be expiated by any meaſure of ſufferings, or if God could repent, or be moved to compaſſion, there might be hope in hell; but all theſe are impoſſible: For God changeth not, guilt diminiſheth not, the ſoul waſteth not, therefore the worm never

never dieth, and the fire is never quenched, *Mark* 9. 48. And to ſeal up this bottomleſs pit upon ſuch miſerable ſouls, we may add, that if there might be any help in this caſe, either Chriſt muſt ſuffer once more to expiate Goſpel diſobedience, as he ſuffered for legal, or time muſt be called back again for theſe tormented ones to enjoy once more the Goſpel which they refuſed. But neither of theſe can be imagined. Chriſt will no more leave the boſom of his Father and his glory, having *offered one ſacrifice for ever, and being ſet down at the right hand of God, from hence expecting, that all his enemies ſhould become his footſtool*, Heb. 10. 12, 13. *For if we ſin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgement and fiery indignation, which ſhall devour the adverſaries*, verſes 26, 27. And who can call time again that is paſt? If God ſhould bring the Sun back upon the dial, by a contrary motion, through all thoſe minutes of time it hath gone from the beginning of the creation, and of its motion in the firmament, time would ſtill goe forward, by the Suns going backward, and it would meaſure ſucceeding time by its retrograde motion

motion. So that to call time again that is paſt, is one of thoſe impoſſibilities, which God himſelf cannot doe, becauſe it implyeth a contradiction. Therefore this ſhall aggravate the miſery of the ſoul under the wrath of God, that the ſufferings are eaſeleſs, endleſs and helpleſs; wherein the wicked ſhall bewail their loſt ſeaſons never to be regained, and their precious time never to be redeemed. Deſpair is written upon the gate of hell, whence there is no returning; *Omnia te adverſum ſpectantia*, no prints appearing of the feet of any that have come from thence.

Sixthly, the Soul of a wicked man, thus deſpairing under the implacable wrath of God, ſhall ſtir up it ſelf againſt God, through malice and deſpite in ſin, to curſe and blaſpheme him to his face. For the ſoul being an immortal ſpirit, cannot be only paſſive, but active, under its intollerable ſufferings; the object whereof being God, and ſin, and puniſhment, or God puniſhing it for ſin; and all the acts of the ſoul being purely evil and ſinful without the leaſt mixture of good, the ſoul muſt of neceſsity be ſo far from an humble acknowledgement, confeſſion, and godly ſorrow, as to diſcover and act all manner

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of vexation, fretfulneſs, reluctancy, and oppoſition, under the anguiſh of its hopeleſs condition. And this may be demonſtrated if one conſider the nature of a carnal heart and ſpirit, and the tendency thereof, which doth naturally end in this degree of ſin. 1. There is a natural enmity in every carnal ſoul againſt God, which remaineth for ever in it, where grace doth not ſubdue, and mortifie it. *The carnal mind is enmity to God*, Rom. 8. 7. *And it is not ſubject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.* So that this enmity is diſcovered in this life, by acts of ſin, and wicked workes done by carnal men againſt the holy and righteous will of God; and conſequeutly abiding in the ſoul after death, it will in like manner manifeſt it ſelf to eternity, the Soul being wholly void of all ſanctifying and renewing grace. Secondly, This enmity will more fully act after diſſolution, by the total withdrawing of the ſpirit of God, whereby in this life it was limited and reſtrained. God ſetteth bounds to carnal men in this life, to keep the world in ſome degree of peace, for the more quiet habitation of his people, without which their lives on earth would be altogether diſquiet and uncomfortable, through

through the rage and fury of the wicked. But in hell there is not ſo much as reſtraining grace to dam up the fountain of corruption from breaking out and flowing forth in its full ſtrength and liberty. Thirdly, the greateſt ſufferings whatſoever have no power to ſuppreſs or deſtroy corruption and carnal enmity, as in themſelves conſidered. It is a ſanctified affliction, through the love of God, that purgeth and taketh away ſin from his children, who by his chaſtiſements are made partakers of his holineſs. But the torments of hell are the execution of the fierce wrath of God, wherein there is not the mixture of one dram of love; God intending the deſtruction, and not the ſalvation of the ſoul, in taking vengeance upon it. So that the ſinful habits, and habitual enmity of the ſoul, are increaſed and blown up to the higheſt degree of malice by deſpair under eternal puniſhment. Fourthly, To this we may alſo add, that to be given up to ſin, is one of the greateſt Judgements of God, and therefore may be a part of, or at leaſt an adjunct to the torments of the damned. God ſometimes puniſheth ſin with ſin, by hardning the heart for its hardneſs, and ſearing the conſcience for

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its ſenſeleſsneſs, and giving up to believe a lye, for not receiving the love of the truth, as alſo he gave up thoſe Idolaters, who impriſoned the natural light and knowledge of God, to uncleanneſs, vile affections, and a reprobate mind, *Rom.* 1. Now the higheſt degree of ſin God giveth up a carnal man unto in this life, is the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt; which is to ſin with malice, and to *doe deſpight unto the ſpirit of grace*, Heb. 10. 29. When a reprobate heart ſhall grow to that hardneſs in ſin, as to ſin under conviction, and to revenge it ſelfupon God and the ſpirit of God, by committing ſin upon the account of ſin, or becauſe it is ſin; otherwiſe it cannot be a wilful ſinning after receiving of the knowledge of the truth. This being the higheſt degree of ſin upon earth, the formality whereof is malice and revenge, we may eaſily be perſwaded to believe, that hell is full thereof, where this malice is more ſtirred up by deſpair under theſe torments, then it can be in this life; and where the ſouls of the wicked vent their malice againſt God, by blaſpheming and curſing him to his face, which is the proper diſcovery of it; as deſperate malefactors ſometimes in their torments curſe

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both Judge and Executioner. And for the proof of this, *I* ſhall only argue the caſe from two or three Scripture inſtances. Firſt, of *Job*, whom *Satan* ſuppoſed to be but a hypocrite, and tempted God to afflict him, with this confidence *that he ſhould curſe him to his face*, Job 1. 11. The Devil well knew what overwhelming afflictions would work upon a carnal and ſinful heart, even to curſe God to his face; and had not *Jobs* ſincerity through the power of God upheld and preſerved him, the Devil had had his deſign, and *Job* had curſed God, as well as the day of his birth. Another is of the wicked ones, of whom the Prophet *Iſaiah* ſpeaketh, *Iſai.* 8. 21. *And they ſhall paſs through it hardly beſtead and hungry; and it ſhall come to paſs, that when they ſhall be hungry, they ſhall fret themſelves and curſe their King and their God, and look upward.* Whence it appeareth, that when God upon earth puniſheth a people for their wickedneſs, with ſome extream calamity, under which they deſpair, looking upwards and ſeeing no help, the wickedneſs of their hearts will through madneſs and malice break out into curſing of their King, and their God, whether

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true or falſe. Which appeareth yet more clearly in the propheſie of the powring forth of the vials of the wrath of God upon the Antichriſtian party, in ſeveral plagues and puniſhments, for their final ruine and overthrow, *Rev.* 16. 9. *And men were ſcorched with great heat, and blaſphemed the name of God, which hath power over theſe plagues, and they repented not to give him glory.* And verſe 11. *They blaſphemed the God of Heaven, becauſe of their paines and their ſores, and repented not of their deeds.* Likewiſe verſe the laſt, *They blaſphemed God becauſe of the plague of the hail, for the plague thereof was exceeding great.* Much more will a ſinful ſoul blaſpheme in hell where deſpair is the torment of thoſe torments. Which Chriſt himſelf ſeemeth to put out of all queſtion, ſpeaking of the ſufferings of hell, when he ſaith, *There ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth*, Math. 8. 12. and 13. 42, 50. That is againſt God, through fretfulneſs and malice, for ſo the phraſe of gnaſhing the teeth is taken in other Scriptures. *Pſal.* 37. 12. *The wicked plotteth againſt the juſt, and gnaſheth upon him with his teeth.* So the Jews did upon *Stephen*, *Acts* 7. 54. *When they heard theſe things,*

they were cut to the heart, and gnaſhed on him with their teeth. So that as the Saints in heaven bleſs God with Praiſes and Hallelujahs, ſo the damned in hell howl under pain and curſe him: and thus in hell ſin ſhall be perfected, as well as grace in heaven; & every wicked and graceleſs ſoul ſhall ſin under ſuffering, while it is ſuffering for ſin.

Laſtly, Hereupon the wrath of God is further provoked, and heightned, by the actual ſin of a wicked and deſperate ſoul under its torments. So that to make this everlaſting puniſhment of a damned ſoul in hell unſpeakable miſerable, the ſufferings thereof are not only eternal, as they are the juſt reward of ſin committed in this life againſt an infinite God, whoſe juſtice can never be fully ſatisfied, but by the eternity of the puniſhment; but they are alſo for ever increaſed and renewed by enraging provocations of malice and blaſphemy, whereby the ſoul requoileth againſt God, through anguiſh thereof. By this we may conceive how exquiſite the torments of the wicked will be hereafter, the ſoul eternally ſinning, and continually adding freſh oyl to the flames of wrath; for ſin kindleth wrath, and wrath kindleth hell,

hell, and hell kindleth ſin, and ſin again wrath, and ſo for ever. This is the work and action between an infinite God, and a poor unhappy ſoul to eternity; God puniſhing,& the ſoul ſinning,and the ſoul ſinning,& God puniſhing; in which torments the body ſhall partake with the ſoul after its reſurrection,being united again,& made ſo far capable to endure its torments, as not to be diſſolved, or deſtroyed,by the extremity and eternity of them. Thus ſinful and wretched man ſhall be ever dying, weeping, yelling, howling and ſinning, under the intollerable pangs of the ſecond death, *Rev.* 21.8. *The fearful, and unbeleiving,and the abominable,and murderers, and whoremongers, and ſorcerers, and idolaters, and all lyars,ſhall have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimſtone: which is the ſecond death.* Repent therefore and beleive the Goſpel, turn from your ſins and forſake your wayes, that ye may eſcape this judgement of God, for now is the day of ſalvation, through the forbearance of God, who would have have all men to be ſaved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth.

From this Text and Doctrine we may be again informed, upon what grounds

the people of God may deſire their diſſolution. How deſireable a priviledge the departure of the Saints is, hath been already opened; but for further direction in it, I ſhall here make up the banks, to keep theſe deſires in their right channel, which otherwiſe are ready to break out into unlimited and unlawfull currents. Therefore to ſatisfie this caſe of conſcience concerning the deſire of death, let every precious ſoul conſider theſe following Propoſitions.

Firſt, It is altogether unwarrantable for beleivers to deſire diſſolution out of meer paſſion, under the ſoreſt trouble, affliction, or tryal. It is uſual for carnal men, upon diſcontent, to wiſh they might dye; who alſo under the burthenſomneſs of corporal diſtempers, often deſire a releaſe from their preſent paines, not knowing or conſidering, that thereby they ſhall immediately fall from their beds into hell. This alſo is incident to the Godly, through infirmity, whoſe paſſions in this caſe are not excuſable. Thus it was with that holy Prophet *Elijah*, when he was forc'd to flee from the rage and perſecution of *Jezebel*, who threatned to take away his life, 1 *Kings* 19. 34. *And when he ſaw*

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that, he aroſe and went for his life, and came to Beerſheba *and left his ſervant there, but he himſelf went a dayes journey into the wilderneſs, and came and ſate down under a juniper tree, and he requeſted for himſelf, that he might die, and ſaid, it is enough now, O Lord, take away my life, for I am no better then my Fathers.* *Elijah*'s paſſion under this perſecution, being now alone, tired and weary probably with his journey, as well as aſſaulted and troubled with ſlaviſh fear, was the ground of this his requeſt and ſupplication. Now if we compare with this ſtory the expreſſion of S. *James*, preſenting *Elias* as an example of the prevalency of prayer, we may judge, that this paſſion was an infirmity in this Prophet, *James* 5. 17. Elias *was a man, ſubject to paſſion as we are, and he prayed, &c.* The like inſtance we have of *Job*, who through paſſion gratified *Satan* ſo far under his temptation, as to curſe the day of his birth, and alſo through vexation of ſpirit under his afflictions to wiſh and long for his grave, *Job.* 3. 20, 21, 22. *Wherefore is light given to him that is in miſery, and life unto the bitter in ſoul? which long for death and it cometh not, and dig for it more then for hid trea-*

ſures; which rejoyce exceedingly, and are glad when they can find the grave. Take alſo the Prophet *Jonah* for an example hereof, who, after he had preached deſtruction to *Nineveh*, according to the word of the Lord, and ſaw not the execution thereof according to his prophecy, was diſcontent at the patience and repentings of God towards that City, and beſought the Lord he might dye, *Jonah* 4. 3: *Therefore now, O Lord, take I beſeech thee my life from me, for it is better for me to dye, then to live,* for which the Lord checketh him in the next verſe, *doſt thou well to be angry?* And in the 9, and 10: verſes. When the Gourd was withered, and the Wind and Sun beat upon him, that he fainted, he wiſhed he might dye again, and paſſionately replies to Gods ſecond rebuke of him, *I do well to be angry even unto the death.*

Secondly, Every Chriſtian, looking upon death as a priviledge, and means to bring him to Chriſt, ought no further to deſireit, then with ſubmiſſion to the will of God, and a willing ſubjection to his work and ſervice in his generation. To haſten death by unlawful meanes is no leſs then ſelf murther, as hath been already proved; and hereby the deſire thereof

thereof is in ſome meaſure limited, preſervation of life by all lawful means being a duty incumbent upon all. Our times and ſeaſons, life and death, are in the hands only of God, the wiſe diſpoſer of all things for the good of them that love him; between whoſe will and ours there ought to be a perfect conformity in relation to all changes and diſpenſations. Chriſt eſcaped from the Jews, when they often ſought to kill him, becauſe his hour was not yet come; but then he refuſed not, but accepted that bitter cup, which his Father gave him to drink. When *Job* had recovered himſelf from under the power of his paſſion, he beſought the Lord to appoint him a ſet time, and he would wait, *Job* 14. 14. *All the dayes of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.* We muſt not run home before we have done our worke, but mind our worke as well as our reward. God hath appointed a particular ſervice for every beleiver in his generation, which he ſhould labour to finiſh, with *David*, before he falleth aſleep. *Acts* 13. 16. For David *after he had ſerved his own generation, by the will of God fell aſleep.* Saint *Paul* declaring to *Timothy* the near approach of his diſſolution and departure, forgetteth not to mention the finiſhing of his work in

the Goſpel, 2 *Tim.* 4.6,7. *I am now ready to be offered up, and my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith.* But till it was finiſhed, he was willing to abide in the fleſh, notwithſtanding his great deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt, as in the words following my Text. *Nevertheleſs to abide in the fleſh is more needful for you. And having this confidence, I know I ſhall abide and continue with you, for your furtherance and joy of faith.*

Thirdly, This being minded, it is lawful and warrantable for a gracious perſon to deſire to depart and to be with Chriſt. Who among all the heires of promiſe, doth not deſire the poſſeſſion and enjoyment of his hopes in Chriſt, his deliverance from ſin, ſufferings, and ſorrow, and the full fruition of all the glory and happineſs of his heavenly portion and inheritance? Let the ſpiritual ecchoes and ſilent anſwers of all true born *Iſraelites* reſolve this queſtion; whoſe hearts are enlarged to rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God, unto which they are begotten, by the reſurrection of Jeſus Chriſt from the dead. This maketh the greateſt afflictions of the Saints in this world ſo

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light unto them, *while they look not at the things which are ſeen*, but at the things which are not ſeen, 2 *Cor.* 4. 18. And therefore reckon with *Paul*, *That the ſufferings of this preſent time, are not worthy to be compared with the glory that ſhall be revealed in them*, Rom. 8. 18. Hence are thoſe earneſt groanes and longing deſires of the righteous to be uncloathed, and cloathed upon with their houſe from heaven; wherein they ſymbolize and ſympathize with the whole creation, which deſireth to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God, *Rom.* 8. 23. *And not only they, but our ſelves alſo, which have the firſt fruits of the ſpirit, even we our ſelves groan within our ſelves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.*

Uſe 3. Uſe of inquiry. If it be the deſirable priviledge of the Saints to be brought immediately unto Chriſt, by their death, then it may be profitable and uſeful for us to inquire into the cauſes, why many Chriſtians are ſo far from deſiring it, & chearfully ſubmitting unto death, as that they tremble at it, and ſeem to flye from it. What is the reaſon that they are ſtill in bondage to the fear of death, notwithſtanding

ſtanding the ſting thereof is taken away by the deſtruction of ſin, and the grave perfumed as a bed of ſpices by Chriſt's lying therein: Now therefore, for ſatisfaction to this caſe, and withall to remove and cure this uncomfortable diſtemper, I ſhall lay down briefly ſome of the chief cauſes, whence this fear may ariſe.

Firſt, it may ariſe from a natural principle of ſelf-preſervation. For God hath planted this inſtinct of nature in every part of the creation, to labour to preſerve its being, and ſecure it ſelf from diſſolution. Hence it is that nature, abhorring a vacuity or emptineſs in any part of the univerſe, becauſe it tendeth to deſtruction, for the preſervation thereof, cauſeth in the creatures motions contrary to their inclinations; cauſing the air to deſcend to fill up vacuities in the earthly element, and the water to aſcend, contrary to its nature, to ſupply the room and abſence of the forced air, which we ſee in ſeveral experiments and ordinary inventions. And this principle appeareth in every particular creature, naturally avoiding whatſoever threatneth or tendeth to its deſtruction. But to come nearer to the caſe of humane diſſolution. We naturally ſhun whatſoever we apprehend may

may offer violence to us, and are subject to sudden passions at the approach of cruelty; yea nature put in mind of a weakness in any part of the body, maketh strongest reparations and fortifieth that place where a breach was made: a broken bone well set becometh stronger then before. And hence it is that through fear we decline any eminent danger, and labour to preserve our natural beings, resisting dissolution, as the greatest natural evil. Therefore the Philosopher called death φοβερῶν φοβερώτατον the most terrible of terribles; and *Job*, the King of terrors, *Job*. 18. 14. This natural fear was in Christ himself, as he was man, when he approached his death and sufferings; who through a conflict of nature desired to be delivered from them. *Mat.* 26. 39. *O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.* And yet there was no sin in it, because it was a natural desire, and that for a moment, suddenly overcome by reason and deliberation, or a short suspension, quickly subdued by a voluntary submission and firm resolution, the spirit being willing, but the flesh weak in Christ himself But grace doth not only teach to deny self but is also powerful to subdue our natura wills and inclinations to the will of God,

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as it was alſo in Chriſt, nevertheleſs *not my will, but thine be done.*

Secondly, It may proceed from immoderate love, and inordinate affections to the world, and the things of this preſent life. And there is a great proneneſs in believers themſelves, to give too much liberty to earthly and worldly affections, and to take too much delight and content in the good things of this life, which are but *bona corporis*, the goods of the body. Theſe things are ſnares unto us in our life, and as ſtocks to the feet of the ſoul at the time of departure. How loth are we to let go our tenure and hold of theſe delights upon a ſick bed; to take our laſt farewell, and ſhake hands with near and dear relations; to have our eyes cloſed, and no more to be opened upon theſe viſible comforts; and to ſuffer the pillow to be drawn away from our heads, that we may yield up our ſpirits to a more eaſie and free paſſage? Certainly, if we were more crucified to the world, and ſtrangers in it, we ſhould far more willingly leave it; whereas, through the love of it, we are ſtill hoping for a longer time and continuance in it, and that God would ſtill add either more yeares to our dayes, or at leaſt more dayes

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to our years. Were not the ſtakes of our worldly delight drove ſo deep and ſtrongly faſtned in the earth, our earthly tabernacles would more eaſily be diſſolved. The creatures in themſelves are good; and life is not only ſweet in it ſelf, but as it is alſo, *ratio poſſidendi*, our tenure of them; they are but for one life, without renewing the leaſe thereof. Therefore for the looſening of theſe cordes and ſtakes, conſider how much better one Chriſt is, then all the creatures; and one God, then a thouſand worlds; and the glory of heaven, then the ſuperficial varniſh and beauty of the whole earth. If ye be Chriſtians and riſen with Chriſt, take the Apoſtles counſel, *Col.* 3. 1, 2, 3. Ζητεῖτε τὰ ἄνω, *ſeek thoſe things which are above, where Chriſt ſitteth at the right hand of God; and* φρονεῖτε τὰ ἄνω, *ſet your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth, for ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God. When Chriſt who is our life ſhall appear, then ſhall ye alſo appear with him in glory. Therefore* (ſaith he) *mortifie your members which are upon the earth, inordinate affections, evil concupiſcence, and covetouſneſs which is Idolatry.* Chriſtians, take heed of faſtning your affections here;

here; it may be Chriſt may require you ſhould teſtifie your love to him, by ſuffering for his ſake and the Goſpel, and that unto the death: and if worldly affections diſcompoſe the ſpirit, and render beleivers unfit for a natural diſſolution, how much more will they entangle in a time of perſecution. And *what will it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, and loſe his own ſoul?* For ſaith our Saviour, *whoſoever will ſave his life, ſhall loſe it, and whoſoever will loſe his life for my ſake ſhall find it*, Matth. 16. 23, 24. Remember, that Chriſt is your life, and the cauſe and fountain of life, and if you loſe life it ſelf for him, you will find it again in him; *nec propter vitam vivendi perdere cauſam*, venture not the loſing of Chriſt himſelf for this life ſake. This was *Pauls* preſent caſe and condition in my Text; he was willing to ſuffer, and by ſuffering for Chriſt, to depart unto Chriſt, which is far better.

Thirdly, This fear of death may flow from a want of a clear evidence of an intereſt in Chriſt. When a Chriſtians evidence for heaven is darke and dubious, the white ſtone ſlurred, and the new name hardly legible; when neither his own

ſpirit

ſpirit, nor Gods ſpirit beareth full witneſs, or give in a clear teſtimony to adoption and reconciliation; in this caſe eternity is terrible, and the face of death, and its appearance, exceeding ghaſtful. Sometimes the death of the Godly is a ſtreight paſſage, and a darke entrance, when together with the pangs of diſſolution, the guilt of ſin appeareth to conſcience, the wonted favour of God is withdrawn, by removing his ſupporting preſence, and the Devil by ſtrong aſſaults and temptations takes advantage of weakneſs to vex and diſquiet the ſoul ſtriving, and ſtrugling for ſupport and comfort. Methinks I hear ſuch a heart cry out in the words of the Prophet *David*, Pſal. 39. 13. *O ſpare me, that I may recover ſtrength, before I go hence, and be no more ſeen.* It is exceeding hard for a Chriſtian to venture to launch forth into eternity upon uncertainties, and without a hopeful, at leaſt, if not a full and ſatisfactory perſwaſion of happineſs and ſalvation. In this caſe the ſoul hath no other help, but to roul it ſelf upon mercy, by renewing the acts of faith upon Chriſt, to ſtay it ſelf upon God, though hiding his face; and ſtrongly to reſt and rely upon the rock of ages. And let this comfort and ſupport

in ſuch an hour of trouble and tryal, that when thou droppeſt into eternity, and ſeemeſt to fall in the act of diſſolution into eternal ſorrow, then the everlaſting armes are ready to receive thee, and as ſoon as ever death cloſeth the eyes of thy body, thy ſoul ſhall ſee the glorious face of God himſelf, to thy everlaſting, though unexpected joy. Therefore imitate and follow the ſteps of Chriſt thy forerunner, who in the ſame condition of deſertion exerciſed faith upon the croſs, ſaying, *Mat.* 27. 46. *My God, my God, why haſt thou forſaken me?*

Fourthly, The Saints may be ſubject to the fear of death, and not chearfully ſubmit unto it, from their ignorance of the ſtate of heaven, and their happineſs with God hereafter. It is a received axiome *ignoti nulla cupido*, we cannot deſire what we do not know and apprehend. And though the greateſt part of what we know here, be the leaſt part of what we know not, but ſhall know hereafter, for we know but in part; yet moſt Chriſtians are guilty of neglect & unexcuſable ignorance, in that they might know far more of the ſtate of heaven then they doe. It is true what the beloved Diſciple and Apoſtle aſſerts,

1 *John*

1 *John* 3. 2. *Beloved, now are we the Sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we ſhall be: but we know we ſhall be; like him for we ſhall ſee him as he is.* The Scriptures are not altogether ſilent in revealing So the glorious inheritance of the Saints. that though we are not able in our underſtanding, while we are in the body, to behold ſo great a glory, had it been fully revealed; yet ſo much is revealed thereof unto us, that we may in the promiſes thereof diſcerne and contemplate, as we doe the glory of the Sun by its reflexion in ſtill waters. For as it is written, 1 *Cor.* 2. 9. *Eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man, the things which God hath revealed unto them that love him*; but as it followeth in the next verſe, *God hath revealed them unto us by his ſpirit; for the ſpirit ſearcheth all things, yea the deep things of God*; among which are *profunda cœli*, the high or deep things of heaven. It would be endleſs to gather together thoſe pieces of heaven, which like rich pearles and ſparkling diamonds lye ſcattered up and down the Scriptures. Let every high and heaven-born ſoul look more after his portion, and ſpend more time in ſurveying that inheritance incor-

ruptible, undefiled, & that fadeth not away, reſerved in the heavens for him. This will ſweeten the thoughts of death, and ſtrengthen the ſoul to encounter the King of terrours. Who would not endure the ſtrongeſt paines for heavenly pleaſures? who would not ſhoot this gulph for eternal gain? who would not dare to dye once, that he might live, and never dye more? yea who would not depart, that he might be with Chriſt?

Uſe. 4. Then ſuffer the word of exhortation: and firſt, let every natural men accept of a friendly call to provide and prepare for the day and hour of his diſſolution. Conſider wherefore thou art come into the world, and how thou mayſt cloſe thy dayes in peace. Wherefore hath God given thee a being, and breathed into thy noſtrils the breath of life? Why did not ſhe that bare thee miſcarry before ſhe had reckoned her months, that thou waſt not the untimely fruit of the womb? why waſt thou not ſtifled in the birth, and the long expectations of him that begat thee fruſtrate with the news of a ſtilborn child? or why diedſt thou not in thine infancy, as a bloſſome withered through ſudden blaſting? By how many preventing and preſerving pro-

providences hath thy life been renewed and continued unto thee, that thou ſtill draweſt thy breath, and ſwalloweſt thy ſpittle? what account canſt thou give of the golden talent of time God hath betruſted thee withal, upon every moment whereof dependeth eternity? Call to mind the dayes that are paſt and gone, and ſhall return no more, and examine the ſhort periods and diviſions of time never to be recalled; which thou haſt ſpent either idlely and impertinently, or for the moſt part ſinfully and prophanely. Art thou born to ſin? or doſt thou therefore ſin, that thou mayſt ſhorten thy dayes, by haſtening to fill up the meaſure of thine iniquity? why ſhouldſt thou dye before thy time? Is there no meaſure of ſin, or bounds of profaneneſs, that thou drinkeſt in ſin, as the fiſh the water, and draweſt iniquity with cart ropes and the cords of vanity? O make not ſo much haſt to hell, thou wilt be there too ſoon; but turn at reproofe, and to day, whileſt it is called to day, harden not thy heart: who knoweth what a night may bring forth, or whether thine eyes ſhall ſee the light of another day? Compoſe a while thy wandring unſetled thoughts, and if thou canſt be ſerious at ſuch a ſolemn aſſembly and ſad occaſion,

tell me if thou canſt venture this night thy eternal condition to be determined upon thee by a ſudden diſſolution? Art thou ready to be uncloathed, and to lye down in the duſt of death? or doſt thou not tremble at the thoughts of it, as a poor ſinful creature, amazed, diſtracted, and confounded in thy ſelf through the fear of death, and hell that followes it? Oh caſt not away ſo precious a ſoul, though thou haſt hitherto made it a ſervant to ſin, and a drudge to *Satan*. If thou kneweſt the worth of an immortal ſpirit, thou wouldeſt not barter it away to the Devil for ſuch ſhort and empty pleaſures, nor expoſe it to the rapine of vain luſts to be defiled and deflowred; but on the contrary, by all means and unwearied paines, ſeek the deliverance and ſalvation thereof from eternal miſery, and everlaſting ruine, which ſhall be inevitable, without true and unfeigned repentance. That I may now catch thee in thy fall, and pull thee out of the fire, and through compaſſion ſave a ſoul from death (for knowing the terrour of the Lord we perſwade men) oh reſiſt not the counſell of God to thy deſtruction; but accept of direction from an unworthy labourer in the Lords vineyard, who ſhall rejoyce

joyce to become an inſtrument of bringing thee in to God, that thou mayeſt be tranſlated from the power of darkneſs into the Kingdom of his dear Son.

Firſt, Search the Scriptures, and make them the impartial judge of thy condition. Examine thy heart and wayes by the infallible touchſtone of the word of God, and try the rectitude or declination of thy ſoul by this line and plummet. The word of God is the true ſtandard and exact ballance of the Sanctuary, by which, if thou wouldeſt not be deceived, thou mayeſt know thy preſent, and conſequently thy future eſtate to eternity. Therefore open this booke, and in obedience to this preſent call of God unto thee, take and read, and judge thy ſelf, that thou mayeſt eſcape the final condemnation and judgement of God, when this book, with the reſt of thoſe bookes mentioned by Saint *John* in his Revelation, ſhall be opened, *Rev.* 20. 12. *And I ſaw the dead, ſmall and great, ſtand before God, and the bookes were opened; and another booke was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged out of thoſe things, which were written in the bookes, according to their workes.* Friend, God will not judge thee by another law and rule then what he

hath revealed unto thee; for he is righteous in judgement. And though the heathen, that have not this law of God revealed unto them, ſhall be judged without it, even by the light of nature, and the law of their own conſciences, whereby they are a law unto themſelves, yet they that have it, ſhall be judged by it, *Rom.* 2. 12, 13, 14, 15. *For as many as have ſinned without law, ſhall alſo periſh without law; and as many as have ſinned in the law, ſhall be judged by the law, &c.* And think not to plead ignorance in that day, for that will be but to plead guilty alſo, where God hath afforded ſo much meanes of knowledge. For God hath not caſt thy lot and habitation in a land of darkneſs, but of light, and under the plain and powerful miniſtery of the Goſpel, under which thou canſt not be ignorant, unleſs thou ſhutteſt thine eyes againſt the truth, and loveſt darkneſs rather then light, that thou mayeſt ſin more ſecurely. Therefore ſuppoſing, through charity, that thou art not wholly ignorant and unacquainted with the myſteries of the Goſpel, and the rule of righteouſneſs contained in the holy Scriptures, let me engage thee to a ſelf examination by them, as being able to

make

make thee wiſe unto ſalvation. But give me leave however to put that queſtion to thee, which *Paul* put to King *Agrippa*, *Acts* 26. 27. *King* Agrippa, *beleiveſt thou the Prophets?* Beleiveſt thou the Scriptures? if thou beleiveſt, why trembleſt thou not at the wrath of God proclaimed, and his judgment denounced againſt ſin, and ſinners? But how canſt thou beleive, and ſtill perſevere in prophaneneſs, and a wicked and licentious converſation? Suppoſe thou ſhouldeſt ſee one of thy old acquaintance and companions in iniquity now in torments, ariſe out of his grave, and hear him relate with trembling and aſtoniſhment the miſerable eſtate of the damned in hell, and the unexpreſſible paines they endure there, and withal, falling proſtrate at thy feet, with cryes and teares beſeech thee to repent and accept of the riches of mercy now offered unto thee in the Goſpel, that thou mighteſt not periſh in the ſame condemnation and deſtruction; would not this ſcare and affright thee, or worke in thee a ſerious reflexion upon thy ſinful condition? Now hath not the eternal God, and Jeſus Chriſt, the faithful and true witneſs, declared the ſame unto thee by the word of truth, which

cannot be broken or changed, and doſt thou remain ſtill ſecure and obſtinate? It is to be feared, if thou beleiveſt not the report of God, that thou wouldeſt not beleive the report of man, though God ſhould miraculouſly call up the dead to warne thee. As *Abraham* told the rich man in hell, intreating him *to ſend* Lazarus *from the dead unto his Fathers houſe, to his five brethren, to teſtifie unto them leaſt they ſhould come to that place of torment*, Luke. 16. 29, 31. *They have* Moſes *and the Prophets, let them hear them; and if they hear not* Moſes, *nor the Prophets, neither will they be perſwaded though one roſe from the dead.* Hearken therefore not only to *Moſes* and the Prophets, but to a greater then *Moſes*, to Chriſt and his holy Apoſtles, by whom the counſells of God, and his good, and perfect, and acceptable will, are ſufficiently made known unto the Sons of men. *For the Lord Jeſus ſhall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty Angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and obey not the Goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Theſſal. 1. 8. Let every ſoul then enquire after God, and examine the evidences of his ſal vation, the

grounds

grounds of his hope, the fruits of repentance, the ſignes of regeneration, and the Scripture markes and characters of a ſound and ſaving faith in Chriſt Jeſus. For without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe God, without holineſs no man ſhall ſee him; and without repentance, and regeneration no ſalvation. Therefore be not deceived, but ſearch the Scriptures daily whether theſe things be ſo or no.

Secondly, ſet the fear of God and his wrath before your eyes continually. Conſider O ye Sons of men, in whoſe preſence ye are at all times, yea when ye are moſt retired from the eyes of men; who can ſtrike you dead in the act of ſin, though never ſo ſecretly committed; ſtand in awe therefore and ſin not, for the patience of God to every carnal ſoul perſiſting in rebellion and diſobedience, is but a preſent ſuſpenſion of eternal wrath, which may ſuddenly break forth, and begin in temporal judgements upon them. And take heed of interpreting the ſilence of God to be his allowance of ſin; for *becauſe ſentence againſt an evil work is not executed ſpeedily, therefore the heart of the Sons of men is fully ſet in them to doe evil*, Eccle. 8. 11. Whereas if the Lord ſhould execute his

his wrath immediately upon every profane perſon in the act of ſin, what fear would ſurpriſe your hearts? who would ſwear a profane oath if he were ſure to dye as ſoon as the word is out of his mouth? who would commit adultery, if he were to be thruſt through with a ſword in the act of his uncleanneſs? who would ſteal his neighbours goods, if he were perſwaded, he ſhould be immediately ſtoned to death? what drunkard would venture upon exceſs, if he apprehended every immoderate draught to be ſo much deadly poyſon to deſtroy him? Or who would exalt himſelf againſt God and his people, if he beleived, that the earth would preſently open her mouth, and ſwallow him up quick? And is the wrath of God leſs fearfull, becauſe through patience it is deferred in the execution of juſtice, and recompenſe upon ungodly men? For ye are not only by nature the children of wrath, but becauſe of theſe things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of diſobedience. *Epheſ.* 5. 6. Therefore let no man deceive himſelf with vain confidence and preſumption, as if God had ſaid in vain, that he will render to every man according to his deedes. *Unto them that are contentious,*

and

and obey not the truth, but obey unrighteouſneſs, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguiſh upon every ſoul of man that doth evil, of the Jew firſt, and alſo of the Gentile, Rom. 2. 8, 9. O that ye would ſet the Lord before your eyes, and his conſuming diſpleaſure, when ye are venturing upon any act of folly and iniquity: poſſibly this might reſtrain corruption, and check your violent luſts, ready to break out into practiſe and actual commiſſion. What are the damned ſuffering in hell, for the ſame ſins that ye are committing daily? Bethink your ſelves how ye ſhall endure thoſe torments; or rather, that ye may eſcape them, labour to foreſee them, and preſent them to the face of your ſtout and headſtrong corruptions. When the temptation is before you, the place preſent, and the company of evil workers ready to joyn with you in any unlawful and ſinful enterpriſe or deſign, remember that hell is kindled, and the flames thereof aſcend for ever. Is not a fiery furnace hot enough; or a bottomleſs pit deep enough to terrifie your ſenſeleſs ſpirits? Or can ye endure to be ever burning in that furnace, and ever falling in that pit? Our Saviour tells thoſe that offend his little ones, *Matth.* 18. 6.

That

That it were better a milſtone were hanged about their necks, and they caſt into the bottom of the ſea. Were there any hope for ſuch to ariſe from perithing under the mighty waters? And is there not much more weight in the infinite wrath of an omnipotent God, to ſink you down to the nethermoſt hell, and to keep you under the foaming billowes and raging and roaring waves of the Lake of burning brimſtone? O that ye would conſider this, ye that forget God, leaſt he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you, *Pſal.* 50. 22. Venture not the day of Gods diſpleaſure, and provoke no longer omnipotency to appear againſt you, leaſt the roaring lion ſeize upon the prey; and ſay not peace and ſafety, for ſudden deſtruction ſhall come upon the wicked, as travail upon a woman with child, and they ſhall not eſcape. Ceaſe your mocking, ye that ſcoffe at the threatnings of God, that ſay, *let him make ſpeed and haſten his worke, that we may ſee it, and let the counſel of the holy one of* Iſrael *draw nigh and come, that we may know it,* Iſai. 5. 19. How ſoon the Lord may come in wrath and judgment upon you, ye know not; and all that ſpend their dayes in vanity, ſhall goe downto the grave

grave in a moment. How ſoon doth the cloud ariſe which at length covereth the whole heavens, and the ratling thunders make you tremble, and the white flaſhings of lightning turn you into darke holes to hide your heads? how fair a morning had the wicked *Sodomites*, when the Sun aroſe ſo gloriouſly upon their City, and by and by a ſhowr of fire and brimſtone turned all into aſhes? And how did the ſecurity of the old world, deceive them, when they took no warning by *Noah* the preacher of righteouſneſs, nor by the building of the Arke, until the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the deluge came; the flouds increaſing, and covering the tops of all mountaines, ſo that their was no help in their diſtreſs, but all periſhed together in thoſe ſwelling waters, *Gen.* 7. latter end. And dare ye ſtill ſcoffe at the meſſengers of the Lord, ſaying, where is the promiſe of his coming? Are not the heavens and the earth kept in ſtore, and reſerved unto fire, againſt the day of judgement, and perdition of ungodly men? *And this day of the Lord will come alſo, as a thief in the night,*

night, in the which the heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the elements ſhall melt with fervent heat, the earth alſo, and the workes that are therein ſhall be burnt up. The Lord is not ſlack concerning his coming, but is long ſuffering to you-ward, not willing that any ſhould periſh, but that all ſhould come to repentance. Therefore ſeeing that all theſe things ſhall be diſſolved (when heaven and earth ſhall be in flames) *what manner of perſons ought ye to be in all holy converſation, and godlineſs,* 2 Pet. 3. 9, 10, 11.

Thirdly, Then labour to get an intereſt in Chriſt before ye die. What rich proviſion hath God made for immortal ſouls, in ſending the Lord Jeſus Chriſt into the world, to ſuffer under the imputation of ſin, that he might reconcile the diſobedient and rebellious hearts of men unto himſelf? And how often hath this Goſpel been preached among you, *That God ſo loved the world, that he ſent his only begotten Son, that whoſoever ſhould believe in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life,* John 3. 16. *Therefore we are embaſſadours for Chriſt, as though God did beſeech you by us; we pray you in Chriſt's ſtead, be ye reconciled to God.*

How

How willing is Chriſt to ſave your ſouls, and to redeem you from wrath to come? Oh let not your unbeleif fruſtrate the grace of God, thereby depriving your ſelves of the benefit thereof ſo freely offered and fully revealed unto you. Is not the golden Scepter of grace held forth, and the royal Standard ſet up, and proclamation made to ſinners to turn and live? How will ye eſcape if ye neglect ſo great ſalvation? O ungrateful, and unworthy wretches, who diſdain and ſlight ſuch reports of mercy, and the rich myſtery of Gods good will towards men in Chriſt, which the Angels admiring bow themſelves, and ſtoop down to look into! 1 *Pet.* 1. 12. Hearken, O ye unbeleivers! Is it not a faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Chriſt came into the world to ſave ſinners, whereof ye are the chief? What is the meaning of ſo many publique Aſſemblies every Lords day, and our occaſional comings together upon this, or any other providential call? what is the meaning that ſo many are ſet apart, and make it their ſtudy and labour to preach unto you, whom ye openly ſee in their Pulpits ſpreading their hands, and hear them with ſo much zeal and fervency

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crying aloud, ſpending their very ſtrength, and hazarding their healths, and life it ſelf, in their unwearied paines? Is it not Chriſt whom we preach, and in whom ye ſay, that ye beleive? How can ye beleive that wallow in the mire of your unclean and polluted converſations? How can ye beleive, that commit iniquity with greedineſs, and bluſh not at your open ſins and profaneneſs? How can ye beleive, that make the world your God, and prefer the trraſh of the earth before the treaſures of heaven? How can ye beleive, that ſeek the honour and praiſe, and favour of men more then the honour that is of God, that ye may be great upon earth; and get a name which ſhall be written in the earth? Is it not true that all men have not faith? ye ſay ye beleive, and ye have faith, can your faith ſave you? can a dead faith, a feigned faith a fruitleſs and a workleſs faith ſave you? Can ye prove, or ſhew a true faith without workes? Give me leave to try your faith in regard of the object of it: Doe ye beleive in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Doe ye beleive in that Chriſt, who from the beginning was promiſed to the fore-fathers, who ſaw his day, and rejoyced? who in the fulneſs of time appeared in our fleſh,

made

made of a woman, and under the law, and took upon him the form of a ſervant; who ſuffered ſo much ſhame, and reproach by the contradiction of ſinners, and at laſt an accurſed death, the death of the croſs, for the ſatisfaction of divine juſtice, and appeaſing of the wrath of God, ſo highly provoked by the ſins of men; who aroſe from the grave, having overcome and broken the bands of death, to aſſure unto us our juſtification; who laſtly aſcended into the higheſt heavens, and is there interceeding for his people, and ruling and reigning till he overcome all his enemies, whence he ſhall come again and appear the ſecond time without ſin, unto the final judgement of the world, and the full ſalvation of all that beleive in him? Why then do ye ſay in your ſelves, or is it not the language of our unbeleiving hearts, who ſhall aſcend into heaven to bring Chriſt from above, and who ſhall deſcend in to the deep to bring up Chriſt again from the dead? What ſtrange fancies have ye in your mindes of Chriſt, and beleiving in Chriſt? Is not your faith a fancy? O that the word of faith were nigh unto you, even in your hearts, the word of faith which we preach! And

that ye would beleive our report, when we preach Chriſt, and him crucified, as we have evidently ſet him forth crucified among you. Beſides, if ye had faith, as a grain of muſtard ſeed, it would ſoon manifeſt its ſelf by the growth of it, and the fruits that proceed from it. It would be a Chriſt prizing faith, a heart purifying faith, a world conquering and crucifying faith, it would be a Saint loving, and a ſoul humbling faith; it would work in you the fear of God, and the fear of ſin, a love to the truth, and to every ordinance of Chriſt; it would make conſcience tender, and the heart ſincere, and upright with God; yea, it would render holineſs beautiful, and lovely, and all the wayes and commands of the Lord delightful and eaſie; beſides it would make future things preſent, and preſent things abſent, and as if they were not, and yet the beleiving ſoul inherits all things, and poſſeſſeth all things.

The exerciſe of faith is a pleaſant, joyful, and glorious act, through the tranſcendent and unſpeakable excellency of Chriſt the object thereof. Now if theſe things be a myſtery unto you, and your hearts

hearts wholly ſtrangers unto them, look into the Goſpel more ſeriouſly, and acquaint your ſelves further with the riches of the myſtery of Chriſt, even the riches of mercy, and the unſearchable treaſures of Chriſt, and be no more faithleſs, but beleive. If ye were but ſenſible of the wants of your ſouls, as ye are of the ſtraights and neceſſities of your bodies, it would not be ſo hard to perſwade you to come to Chriſt the great treaſury of all ſupplies; who hath gold for the poor, and eye-ſalve for the blind, and white rayment for the naked, *Rev.* 3. 13. Now are not ye thus poor and blind and naked, and conſequently wretched and miſerable? And how freely doth Chriſt offer himſelf to become all fulneſs unto you, who is made of God unto all that beleive, wiſdom and righteouſneſs, and ſanctification, and redemption? 1 *Cor.* 1. 30. what ſure foundation can ye build upon, if Chriſt be not the corner ſtone, and rock of your truſt and confidence? and to whom will ye goe for eternal life, if ye refuſe him, and reject the counſell of God, by perſiſting in unbeleif and impenitency? I can aſſure you from the word of God, that *other foundations can no man lay, then is laid by Jeſus Chriſt.*

1 Cor. 3. 11. *Neither is there ſalvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we muſt be ſaved,* Acts 4. 12. To day therefore, whilſt it is called to day, harden not your hearts, & refuſe not him that ſpeaketh from heaven, leſt you periſh in your unbeleife; but lay hold upon this ſtrength of God, that ye may make peace with him, & ye ſhall make peace, *Iſa.* 27. 5. For he is our peace, by whom we have acceſs with boldneſs unto the throne of grace; *and he is able to ſave unto the uttermoſt all thoſe that come unto God by him,* Heb 7. 25. O ſinners! beleive in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and ye ſhall be ſaved every ſoul of you; your ſins ſhall be blotted out, and your iniquity ſhall be remembred no more; and receive him, who is ready to receive you, and to bleſs you with all ſpiritual bleſſings, that ye may be the children of God, and heires of the promiſes, and of eternal life in the kingdom of heaven.

Secondly, The exhortation is alſo to all Chriſtians; for to ſuch my text hath a more ſpecial relation, even to thoſe, who with their hearts beleive, and love the Lord Jeſus Chriſt in ſincerity; who though peradventure they cannot ſo freely

with

with Saint *Paul* deſire to depart, yet in caſe of departing unfeignedly deſire to be with him. And becauſe ſome of us are come to this place at this time, as *Abraham* at the cave of *Machpelah*, to bury the dead out of their ſight, and are mourning for the departure of a near relation; I ſhall ſpeake a few words unto them, before I come to direct and counſel Chriſtians in general.

And I ſhall only exhort you, freely to reſign your relation to Chriſt, and not to mourn, as thoſe, that have no hope, which was Saint *Pauls* counſel to the *Theſſalonians* in the like caſe, 1 *Theſſ.* 4. 13, 14. which he preſſeth with a ſtrong argument, for, ſaith he, *if we beleive, that Chriſt died and roſe again: even ſo them alſo which beleive in Jeſus, will God bring with him*; which implieth, that they are with God and Chriſt. It becometh all that fear the Lord, to be ſilent in ſubmitting to every providence of God. It is recorded of *Aaron*, when his two Sons were ſlain by an immediate hand of God, and the fire of his diſpleaſure, that after *Moſes* had declared the mind of God unto him, *he held his peace*, Levit. 10. 3. When *David* underſtood the death of his child, for

which he mourned ſo exceedingly during the time of its ſickneſs, *he roſe from the earth, and waſhed and anointed himſelf, and went into the houſe of the Lord and worſhipped*, 2 Sam. 12. 20. The patience of *Job* is ſet forth in Scripture for an example to all beleivers, who when he had heard out the relation of the evil tidings, which his ſad meſſengers brought unto him, of his great loſſes in eſtate, and alſo of the ſudden death of all his children, glorified God under all, *Job* 1. 21. *The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, bleſſed be the Name of the Lord.* How then ſhould Chriſtians not only labour to ſubmit, but willingly and chearfully ſatisfie and quiet their ſpirits, when they part with Relations upon ſuch Comfortable terms, that no ſooner they are out of their ſight, but they are immediately with Chriſt! It is true, nature is ſtrong in her affections, and loth to let go the poſſeſſion of any preſent comfort, and therefore cannot but diſcover her paſſions, when ſhe is bereaved of near enjoyments. And this ſeemeth to be the ground of ſorrow in the breach and diſſolution of natural bonds, even a long continued abſence, or an imagination of never ſeeing departed friends any more,

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if not a conceit of annihilation, and that the dead are not, as ignorant persons are ready to entertain strange notions thereof. But however natural men may immoderately mourn upon such apprehensions of the state of the dead, or (which we may add) of the greatness of their own loss in such a case, who know not how to value or prize a creature comfort with any moderation, because they mind not a greater and better portion: yet where nature hath been at school, and under the teaching and instruction of grace, in those, who understand, and are acquainted with the truths of the Gospel, and the mysteries of Christ; how should all such manifest a more noble and heavenly principle, even the grace they have received, in adorning their profession, and justifying the truth and worth of religion, by a comely, gracious, solid and sweet behaviour and demeanure of themselves under such providences?

The faithful part with their spiritual Relations at their dissolution, upon the grounds of heavenly promotion, wherein they should be more free, then those that can take a joyful farewell of their neerest friends for the greatness of earthly prefer-

ment. Let the Godly husband therefore rejoyce under his ſorrow, and rather weep for joy that the wife of his boſom is tranſlated into the boſome of *Abraham*, and taken into the preſence and embraces of Chriſt her heavenly head and husband; now knowing her no more after the fleſh, but in Chriſt, in whom all natural relations are ſpiritualized by the medicinal union of fellow membership in his body, which is the church and the ſpouſe of Chriſt. And let the off-ſpring and children of ſuch a parent no longer look with teares upon the womb that bare them, the papps that gave them ſuck, and the tender bowels of her that now ceaſeth to care for them; but unto the Lord, with whom the fatherleſs find mercy, and the orphans ſuccour and releif, when they put their truſt in him, and caſt their cares and burthens upon him. How ſoon would tears dry upon our cheeks, and our ſighs and ſobbs turn into ſongs, could we ſee the heavens open, and not only Chriſt ſtanding at the right hand of God, but our dear and godly relations departed at the right hand of Chriſt, having put off the weedes & raggs of mortality and temporal miſery, and being clothed with the garments of praiſe,

praiſe, and robes of immortality and glory! Such a ſight the eye of faith can ſee, which peirceth the heavens, and ſeeth things inviſible. Therefore let us not think, that the Saints departed are leſs happy, becauſe we are uncapable of beholding their heavenly advancement, like *Jacob* deluded by *Joſephs* brethren, and his coat of many colours, which they preſented unto him as torn by wild beaſts; whence he concluded, that he was not, though yet alive, and in the way to be advanced to be Lord of *Egypt*, and the next unto *Pharaoh* in the Kingdom. Our godly relations, though dead, are yet alive, and we ſhall ſhortly goe to them, though they return not to us. I ſhall ſay no more in this caſe but what Chriſt ſaid unto thoſe, who followed him towards his death lamenting him, *Luke* 23. 28. *Weep not for me, but weep for your ſelves & your children.* So weep we not for the dead in Chriſt, but let us weep for our ſelves, and mourn over our dead hearts and their corruptions, that ſin ſtill dwelleth in us, and we cannot honour Chriſt as we deſire, nor doe that which we would, the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit; and withall let us follow Chriſt on earth, and the faith & footſteps of thoſe

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who are with him, that when we depart, we may alſo be with Chriſt, which is far better.

Thus I come at length to lay down ſome ſpiritual directions and counſels to Chriſtians in general, in reference to their comfortable and joyful departing unto Chriſt at their diſſolution:

Direct. I. Labour to rejoyce in beleiving, and ſo to exerciſe and act faith upon Chriſt, as ſpiritually to rejoyce in him. This is a duty incumbent upon all beleivers, though all doe not at all times attain, nor keep up and maintain this heavenly frame and ſweet temper of ſpirit, but walk mournfully and diſconſolately, depreſſed by fear, and doubtings concerning their ſtate and condition in grace; dejected by corruption of nature, and the motions and ſtrivings of the fleſh, the cauſe either of ſinful falls, of diſtracting infirmities, or elſe darkned and clouded by ſpiritual deſertions and withdrawings of the gracious preſence of God formerly enjoyed, and the light of his countenance ſometimes lifted up upon them; vexed alſo by *Satan* troubling their peace by his ſtrong and powerfull temptations, who envying their comfortable and chearful eſtate, endeavoureth what he

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can to diſturbe them, though he cannot deſtroy them: beſides the weighty and burthenſome afflictions wherewithall many gracious hearts are ſometimes ready to be overwhelmed, had they not ſecret ſupports under their oppreſſing tryals. To theſe and to all Chriſtians, the Apoſtles exhortation is to rejoyce in the Lord, *Phil.* 3. 1. *And to rejoyce in the Lord alwayes*, and again to rejoyce, Chap. 4. verſe 4. who layeth it down as a character of the true ſpiritual circumciſion, to rejoyce in Chriſt Jeſus, as well as to worſhip God in the ſpirit, *Phil.* 3. 3. Joy is a fruit of the ſpirit as much as love, faith, and other graces, among which it is numbred, *Gal.* 5. 22. And it is eſſential to the kingdom of heaven, and the ſtate of grace in the ſoul, which is righteouſneſs and peace and joy in the Holy Ghoſt, *Rom.* 15. 17. How then ſhould all that are juſtified by faith, and have peace with God through Chriſt Jeſus, rejoyce in the hope of the glory of God by Chriſt, and in Chriſt himſelf the hope of glory! Who is there among all the people of the Lord, that is not aſhamed to ſay, he doth not love Chriſt, and doth not ſo far at leaſt teſtifie his faith as to declare his deſires to beleive in him?

Beloved,

Beloved, doe ye love the Lord and beleive in him, and can ye not alſo rejoyce in him? Oh that I could ſay of all beleivers, as *Peter* of the beleiving Jews, and the greatneſs of their joy in the incorruptible inheritance, and in Chriſt, 1 *Pet.* 1. 8. Whom having not ſeen ye love, and in whom though now ye ſee him not, yet beleiving ye rejoyce with joy unſpeakable and full of glory. Chear up your ſpirits and lift up your heads and hearts, ye drooping Chriſtians, for your departure unto Chriſt is at hand, and your ſalvation is nearer, then when ye firſt beleived. And ye that are rich in faith, and heires of the kingdom, look unto the hope ſet before you, and endure a little ſhame here, yea, glory in your tribulations, and rejoyce in your ſufferings, for your redemption draweth nigh. Know ye not in whom ye have beleived, who is able to keep what ye have committed to his charge, and to ſave you to the uttermoſt? And rejoyce that ye are made partakers not only of the ſufferings of Chriſt, but of his glory, who is ready to receive you into his boſom, and to give you poſſeſſion of a glorious inheritance prepared, reſerved, and ſecured unto you, having made you ſons and heires, and appointed

ted you to be Kings and Prieſts unto Chriſt and his Father.

Secondly, for the furtherance nd help of your joy in the Lord, make your calling and election ſure. *For hereby an entrance ſhall be adminiſtred unto you abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom of our bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt*, 2 Pet. 1. 10, 11. It is an uncomfortable ſtate for a Chriſtian to hang between heaven and hell, and in a moving ballance betwixt hope and fear, therefore we ought to give diligence, in the ſearching our hearts and examining our hopes, that our evidences may be clear, and our hopes lively, through the aſſurance of hope and underſtanding. *Examine your ſelves whether ye be in the faith; know ye not, that Chriſt is in you, except ye be reprobates*, 2 Cor. 13. 5. They that beleive have the evidence and witneſs in themſelves, the ſpirit it ſelf bearing witneſs with their ſpirits that they are the children of God, *Rom.* 8. 16. But we muſt not expect the witneſs of the ſpirit of God without the preceeding witneſs of our own ſpirits, whereby our evidences are firſt ſigned, and afterwards ſealed by the ſpirit of promiſe.

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For hereby we know, that we dwell in him, and he in us, becauſe he hath given us of his ſpirit, 1 John 4. 13. Unto which knowledge we attain, by our reflexion upon the fruits of the ſpirit within us, as an earneſt of the purchaſed poſſeſſion for us. So that our evidence ariſeth and appeareth, by a diligent ſcrutiny and inquiſition into the work and principles of grace within us, and that by bringing the word to the heart, and judging the heart by the word; by comparing truths with experiences, and experiences with truths; from which premiſes the enlightened and ſanctified conſcience draweth the ſweet concluſion of life and peace. And were we not too much ſtrangers to our ſelves, and guilty of neglect, and careleſs preſumption in the matter of our aſſurance, we might raiſe our comforts to a higher pitch and maintain a better grounded joy and confidence then we doe; who are ready to content our ſelves with naked deſires, weak, and ſtiggering hopes, or at moſt with a queſtionable probability of our ſalvation; yea how many profeſſors are there, who by the difficulty of the work of gaining aſſurance

rance, either diſcourage and cool their affections to it, or elſe by a conceit of an impoſſibility thereof, voluntarily and totally neglect it, But ye, Beloved, build not your hopes and comforts upon ſlight and ſhallow foundations, but ſtirre up your ſelves, and by all unwearied paines reſolve to clear and ballance your accounts for eternity; eſpecially making your calling ſure, and your evidence ſound, concerning the truth of converſion and regeneration. This will be the ſtrongeſt hold, under Chriſt's protection, in the time of temptation, to retire unto, and to preſerve and releive your hearts and hopes, when *Satan* ſhall beat you out of all other Forts and outworkes of defence and confidence, & cauſe you to retreat to your main-guard of converſion evidence. To this end call to mind the birth day of grace, wherein you ſuffered the pangs and throws of the new birth; and recount the experiences of Gods firſt love to you, and your firſt love to Chriſt. How diſcernable was your change, when God turned you from diſmal darkneſs to his marvellous light, and raiſed you from the jawes of death and hell unto the joyes of heaven and ſalvation!

tion! when he comforted you in your deſpair, and anointed you with joy and gladneſs in the time of your ſorrow, and mourning: when your impriſoned and confined hearts were enlarged, and the Devil bound up from torturing & holding you captive under his tyrannical and malilicious power; when the day of light and underſtanding dawned in your hearts, and the glorious Sun of righteouſneſs aroſe with healing to your wounds, and health to your ſouls? But take heed of ſatisfying your ſelves with this, that you have been converted to the Lord; but for the ſtrengthening of your confidence in him, and clearing your intereſt in his love, bring forth of the treaſury of your hearts things new, as well as old; for the more teſtimonies, the ſtronger evidence, anſt the ſurer comfort. Therefore trace the foot-ſteps of Chriſt's ſpiritual and powerful diſpenſations towards your ſouls, in the proceſs and continued courſe of mercy, and his preventing, aſſiſting and ſupporting grace: and reveiw the pillars and monuments you have ſet up in your hearts, for remembrance of ſpecial kindneſs and remarkable expreſſions of his

his love and faithfulneſs unto you, if you can yet read them in Scriptures, not defaced, or blotted out through unthankful forgetfulneſs.

Take alſo a new ſurvey of the carriage of your hearts towards the Lord. What have been your deſires after him? how have ye truſted in him, and cleaved to him? what communion with him? what delight in him? what ſervice have ye done for him? how faithful have ye been to him? what have been your private affections in duty, and your publique zeal in your profeſſion? how have you improved his talents, and encreaſed your ſpiritual ſtock of grace? what growth in meekneſs, ſelf-denial, patience, faith, love, knowledge, holyneſs and purity? what is the preſent frame of your hearts after ſo much means, and ſeaſons of grace ſo long enjoyed? Is it more humble, more heavenly, more unmoveable and fixed upon God? And laſtly, are ye more fruitful, and abounding in the work of the Lord? Thus can ye manifeſt the truth of grace, by the exerciſe of it, the growth and fruitfulneſs of it? hereby your joy ſhall be full, and Chriſt's joy ſhall dwell in you, *John*

15. 11. What a glorious evidence hereby had the beleiving *Theſſalonians*, to whom the Apoſtle *Paul* writeth in their commendation, that their faith grew exceedingly, and their love one towards another abounded, 2 *Theſ.* 1. 3. Happy are they that can aſcend this mountain of aſſurance, and take a ſight as from Mount *Piſgah*, of the heavenly *Canaan*, crying out with Saint *John* in admiration, 1 *John* 3. 1. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath beſtowed upon us, that we ſhould be called the Sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not.* But if your evidences are loſt, or hardly legible, for the renewing and preſerving of them take this next direction.

Direct. III. Thirdly, Then perfect holineſs to the higheſt degree attainceable upon earth. This is the Apoſtles counſel drawn from the great priviledges and promiſes of grace, 2 *Cor.* 7. 1. *Having theſe promiſes, dearly beloved, let us cleanſe our ſelves from all pollution of fleſh and ſpirit, perfecting holineſs in the fear of God.* And becauſe we deny, that any man can be perfect, ſo as to be without ſin, and all infirmi-

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ties upon earth; *for if we ſay we have no ſin, we deceive our ſelves, and the truth is not in us*; 1 John 1. 8. Therefore take this neceſſary caution, of propoſing any meaſure unto your ſelves, thereby to limit your utmoſt endeavours after the greateſt meaſure of grace ye can poſſibly attain unto; for therefore we have a perfect example ſet before us, even God himſelf, that we ſhould be perfect, as he is perfect, *Mat.* 5. 48. And alſo of Chriſt, that he that ſaith he abideth in him, ought alſo to walk even as he walked, 1 *John* 2. 6. That though we are not perfect, yet with *Paul* forgetting thoſe things which are behind, and reaching forth unto thoſe things which are before, we may preſs towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus, *Phil.* 3. 13, 14. *Wherefore, beloved, laying aſide every weight, and the ſin that doth ſo eaſily beſet you, run with patience the race that is ſet before you, looking unto Jeſus, the Authour or Leader, and the finiſher of your faith*, Heb. 12. 1, 2. And ſince ye are dead, and your life is hid with Chriſt in God, with whom ye hope

to appear, mortifie your members which are upon the earth, and crucifie the fleſh with the affections and luſts thereof; labour to conquer all your corruptions, to purge out the reliques of the old leaven, and to waſh your hearts from iniquity, and the vanity of your very thoughts and deſires. Be exceeding careful to ſuppreſs and quench every motion ariſing from the fleſh, and to avoid whatever may defile the conſcience, and thereby cloud your comforts, and darken the light of your inward joy and peace. And I beſeech you, that ye would walk worthy of the Lord unto all well-pleaſing, in obedience to every command, and the ſtricteſt rules of the Goſpel; and that, as ye have at any time heard, how ye ought to walk and to pleaſe God, ſo ye would abound more and more, 1 *Theſ.* 4. 1. That ye may at laſt ſtand perfect and compleat in all the will of God, working out your ſalvation hereby with fear and trembling, *Phil.* 2. 14. *Col.* 4. 12. Wherefore add to your faith vertue, to and vertue knowledge, temperance, patience, godlineſs, brotherly kindneſs, charity, that ye may not be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of Chriſt; and the rather

rather give diligence herein, that ye may make your calling and election ſure, 2 *Pet.* 1. 5, 6, 10.

Direct. IV. Redeem your precious time and the ſeaſons of grace, for the time is ſhort, ſaith the Apoſtle, 1 *Cor.* 7. 29. The time of life is ſhort, the of health and ſtrength is ſhort, and conſequently the time of grace and the opportunities thereof are ſhort. *Therefore ſee that ye walk circumſpectly, or exactly, redeeming the time or ſeaſon, becauſe the dayes are not only ſhort but evil,* Eccl. 5. 15, 16. And that not only in regard of the temptations and ſnares thereof, but of the perils and afflictions, the troubles and tribulations, that attend the laſt dayes of the world. Our Saviour knowing the day of his working and miniſtery to be ſhort, having but a while to remain upon earth, took all occaſions to finiſh his Fathers work, who ſent him into the world, *John* 9. 4 *I muſt work the work of him that ſent me, while it is day; the night cometh, when no man can work.* And is not your night, Chriſtians, coming on, and your Sun near ſetting, when the light of this preſent life, ſhall vaniſh and give place to the darkneſs of death? O that ye would keep an eye upon

aud the ſwiftneſs of that motion, which will ſuddenly have meaſured your appointed race! And be not ſlack in the work of the Lord, but double and redouble your diligence, that ye may be ready for the Maſters call, and the Bride-groomes coming. What a bleſſed condition is that ſoul in, that can ſay with Saint *Paul*, 2 *Tim.* 4. 6, 7. *I am now ready to be offered up, and my departure is at hand, I have fought a good fight, I have finiſhed my courſe, I have kept the faith!* But is it not otherwiſe with many poor ſouls, who could wiſh for another life to be renewed unto them, for the diſcharge of their truſt they have neglected; the improvment of mercies, which they have ſleighted; the filling up of that ſpace, they have idly ſquandred; the gathering in of experiences, which they have pretermitted; and for the laying in of a ſtore and ſtock of grace and wiſdom, by ſuch rich advantages of trade and heavenly gain and profit, which they have loſt and over ſlipped? Who now begin to look back with ſhame and ſorrow upon the time of youth and ſtrength, and the yeares of plenty, and fulneſs of the bread of heaven, bewailing their folly in not providing for the yeares of famine, wherein they will be glad of

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the gleanings of ſuch fruitful ſeaſons. Nevertheleſs lift up the hands that hang down, & the feeble knees, up and be doing, & the worke of the Lord ſhall proſper in your hands; gird up the loynes of your minds, and ſo run, that ye may attain, being ſwift to hear, not ſlothful in buſineſs, fervent in ſpirit, continuing inſtant in prayer, that God would fulfill in you all the good plea- of his goodneſs, and the work of faith with power.

Fifthly, That ye may better redeem the preſent time of grace and mercy, exerciſe your hope with all ſobriety in the uſe of temporal comforts, and enjoyments. Take heed of ſurfeiting your ſelves with the ſweetneſs of creature delights, leſt your hearts ſhould ſay, it is good to be here, and you ſit down ready to take your lot on this ſide of heaven. *But be ſober, and hope unto the end, for the grace and ſalvation that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Pet. 1. 13. Ye that are the children of the day, watch and be ſober, and with *Paul*, whoſe example is imitable in this caſe, labour to beat down your bodies, and to bring them into ſubjection, that ye be not caſt away, 1 *Cor.* 9. 21. It is better to ſtarve luſt, then by pampering

the body to make proviſion for the fleſh to fulfill the luſts thereof. Therefore ſtudy contentment in a mean condition, in this world, having but food and rayment to ſupply the bare neceſſities of this preſent life. A little will ſerve for your paſſage, though all the world ſhould not content you for your portion; becauſe ye are heirs of precious promiſes, and of a rich and glorious inheritance, whereof ye ſhall ſhortly take poſſeſſion in the life that is to come, and in the enjoyment of God himſelf, in whoſe preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at whoſe right hand there are pleaſures for evermore: Wherefore, if by Chriſt, the world be crucifyed unto you, and you unto the world, and ye overcome the world by the victory of faith, live above the vanity and emptineſs of fading and withering comforts, and look not at the faſhion of the world which paſſeth away; but uſe the world as if ye uſed it not, becauſe all theſe things periſh in the uſing, dye in the hand, and the beauty thereof corrupteth and vaniſheth while your eyes are ſet upon them. And let your moderation be known to all men in reſpect of your care and contention for the things of this life, for the Lord is at hand,

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who, if you caſt your burthens upon him, will ſuſtaine you, for he careth for you. Content your ſelves to live at his allowance in your minority, and think not hardſhip unſutable to your preſent ſtate; whereas if you were full, ye might forget the Lord, and leſs mind your home and your Fathers houſe. But if the Lord hath enlarged your preſent eſtate upon earth, content not your ſelves in being rich, unleſs you are rich towards God; and deny your ſelves in what is in your power to uſe and poſſeſs, that ye may doe good in your generation, and lay up for your ſelves a good foundation againſt the time to come.

Direct. VI. Sixthly, For the maintaining of a holy ſobriety of ſpirit, act faith upon eternal promiſes, and the unſeen glory of heaven. Nothing doth more ſupport and bear up the hearts of the Saints, then to live by faith, and to look over the pale of time to the things which are eternal: This will make afflictions light, ſuffering eaſie, the world contemptible, and the hardeſt labour and work for Chriſt and the Goſpel comfortable. *While we look not at the things which are ſeen, but at the things which are not ſeen; for the things which are ſeen are temporal, but*

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but the things which are not ſeen, are eternal, 2 Cor. 4. 18. While faith feedeth upon the promiſes of life and glory, and eyeth the great reward of happineſs and perfection, the ſoul fainteth not under its burden, neither is diſcouraged at the greateſt difficulties in the way of its hopes; but becometh more lively and undaunted in contending with oppoſition, that it may break through, and paſſe to the tree of life, which is in the midſt of the Paradiſe of God. Yea, how fully is the ſoul ſatisfyed in beholding the incomprehenſible riches of eternity! that when it is taken up with the thoughts and meditations thereof, it is ready to forget, that it is ſtill in the body, as being tranſported above the ſphear of ſenſitive objects. This made *David* ceaſe to envy the proſperity of the wicked, when his heart was raiſed to a ſight of God in the Sanctuary, which ſo raviſhed his ſoul, that he brake out into that expreſſion, *Pſal.* 73. 25. *Whom have I in heaven, but thee? and there is none upon earth, that I deſire beſides thee?* And this will ween your affections & deſires from earthly contentments, did ye often by faith viſit your heavenly manſions, and keep your

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thoughts upon Chriſt, and his preparations for you, which the eye hath not ſeen, nor the ear heard, neither hath the heart conceived, and yet not beyond the reach of faith, as it is the evidence of things not ſeen.

Seventhly and laſtly, Labour after a complying heart with the will of God under every diſpenſation of providence towards you in this earthly tabernacle. Be willing to live, or dye, to doe or ſuffer, following every call of God, whoſe infinite wiſdom diſpoſeth of your conditions, and whoſe gracious power is preſent to aſſiſt and ſtrengthen. Acknowledge the Lord in all your wayes, and he ſhall direct your paths, and commit your way to him, and he ſhall give you the deſire of your hearts. Take heed of ſelf-will and ſinful will in oppoſition to the will of Chriſt, but lye proſtrate at his feet, with a holy and an humble reſignation of your ſelves to his will and pleaſure. And let nothing move or terrifie you, neither count your lives dear unto you, that ye may finiſh your courſe with joy. Be contented with any condition, which the Lord ſhall allot unto you, in your preſent pilgrimage and travails homeward; and

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let the conſideration of your approaching aſcenſion unto Chriſt in the higheſt heavens, ſweeten every bitter cup which providence ſhall put into your hands, & lighten every burden which God ſhall lay upon you, knowing that your ſufferings are only temporal, but your joyes will be eternal, and that ye have all your evil here, but your good things are to come. O forget not that your treaſure is in heaven, and where your treaſure is, there let your hearts be alſo, that for the joy that is ſet before you, ye may endure every croſs, and deſpiſe the ſhame of all your ſufferings for Chriſt, counting the ſufferings of this preſent life, not worthy to be compared with the glory which ſhall be revealed in you, when ye ſhall depart hence unto Chriſt, which is far better; Not only better then the preſent ſtraights, troubles, tribulations, and afflictions which attend the Goſpel, the profeſſion of Chriſt, and the ſtate of Grace, but better then the beſt and moſt honourable and comfortable condition, which the Saints of God have ever enjoyed, or can expect to partake of while the foundations of the earth remain. Which I ſhall only add by way of motive to what hath been ſaid by way of counſel, that to depart and

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be with Christ is far better πολλῷ μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον, & that in comparison with the three degrees of excellency attainable in this earthly state. First, it is better then life, and all the comforts of life, which the world can afford, in pleasure, profit, or honour. For all these things are short and uncertain, and at least but created delights and creature enjoyments, which Saint *John* describeth by the *lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life*, 1 John 2. 15. And laboureth to take off our affections from them by an argument drawn from the love of God. And if the *loving kindness of God to his people here, be better then life it self*, Psal. 63. 3. How much more the fulness of his love communicated without measure in the life that is eternal? Secondly, it is better then all the service, which the Saints can doe for God and Christ in their most perfect obedience here below. Yea though we could say with Saint *Paul*, to us to live is Christ, yet to dye and be with Christ were gain and far better; and though in keeping of his commandements there be great reward, and the godly have great peace therein, yet their happiness hereafter shall be the crown of their holiness here, and their reward with Christ

Chriſt ſhall exceed all their labour and worke for him. Laſtly, It is better then the moſt uninterrupted fellowſhip the Saints are capable of with the Father and his Son Jeſus Chriſt, in their neareſt and moſt ſpiritual approaches, in the pureſt ordinances, or moſt heavenly meditations; and that by how much the immediate and glorious preſence of Chriſt & God himſelf in heaven ſurpaſſeth the cleareſt diſcovery & manifeſtations of God to his choſen and precious & faithful people upon earth. Therefore let all the Sons of God wait with joy for the day of their aſcenſion, when they ſhall depart unto Chriſt, who is aſcended far above all things; that he might fill all things. And that your hearts may be filled with joy, and that ye faint not, implore his ſpiritual preſence with his love-ſick Spouſe, *Cant.* 2, laſt. *Untill the day break, and the ſhaddowes flee away: turne my Beloved, and be thou like a Roe, or a young Hart upon the mountaines of* Bether.

FINIS.